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NCB Questions Bollywood Stars Deeepika, Shraddha, Sara In Drugs Case

MUMBAI: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Saturday recorded statements of actors DeeepikaPadukone, ShraddhaKapoor and Sara Ali Khan in the drugs probe linked to Sushant Singh Rajput's death and an alleged Bollywood-drugs nexus.

It also arrested Dharma Productions' executive producer Kshitij Ravi Prasad. The agency has so far arrested at least 18 persons in these cases.

While Sara Ali Khan and ShraddhaKapoor were questioned at the NCB's zonal office at Ballard Estate, Padukone was questioned at a guest house in Colaba, an official of the central agency said.

ShraddhaKapoor reached the NCB office around 12 pm and left after six hours, while Sara Ali Khan reached around 1 pm and left around 5.30 pm.

Padukone was confronted with her manager KarishmaPrakash

during questioning, sources said.

Padukone, who reached the guest house around 9.50 am, left at 3.50 pm. Prakash, who had been quizzed on Friday too, was also allowed to leave around 3.40 pm.

The agency arrested Kshitij Ravi Prasad in the drugs case linked to Rajput's death on Saturday. He had been picked up by a team of NCB from his residence in suburban Versova on Friday morning and questioned

all day at its Ballard Estate office. He was not seen leaving the office even late at night.

On Friday, NCB had also questioned Dharma Productions' Anubhav Chopra in connection with film industry-drug nexus.

In a statement, film-maker Karan Johar had said Prasad joined Dharmatic Entertainment, sister concern of Johar's Dharma Productions, in November 2019 on a contract basis for a project

which did not materialise.

Chopra was briefly associated with his banner as an assistant director and worked only on two projects, he said.

The NCB had earlier arrested actor Rhea Chakraborty, her brother Showik and some suspected drug peddlers.

Rajput (34), an emerging Bollywood star, was found hanging in his apartment in suburban Bandra on June 14.

Quad Countries Deliberating On Common Approach On 5G Technology

NEW DELHI: The US, India, Japan and Australia are exploring to evolve a common approach on 5G telecom technology, expanding their strategic cooperation under the framework of Quadrilateral coalition or "Quad" which was primarily focused on the Indo-Pacific region.

Officials of the four countries discussed the issue at a virtual meeting of the 'Quad' on Friday in the backdrop of growing reluctance by a significant number of countries in Europe and elsewhere to allow Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei Technologies to operate in their territories.

It is learnt that India is already

in touch with Japan for the development of 5G technology, and the issue was deliberated upon extensively during the first foreign and defence ministerial dialogue between the two strategic partners in November last year.

"Noting the importance of digital connectivity and secure networks, the officials discussed ways to promote the use of trusted vendors, particularly for fifth generation (5G) networks," a statement by the US said on Friday after the meeting.

The US has banned Huawei over concerns of security, and Washington has been pressuring other countries to restrict the operations of the Chinese telecom major.

Rs 250-Cr Bank Fraud: KAS...

to officials. The anti-graft body registered the case against Dar and others under various sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act for allegedly sanctioning a loan to the tune of Rs 250 crore in favour of the non-existent society for the purpose of construction of a satellite township at Shivpora locality in Srinagar, bypassing the credit policy of the bank and on the basis of false and fabricated documents, they said.

The ACB investigation revealed that a conspiracy was hatched between Dar, Mir, Hajam, Mujib Ur Rehman Ghani -- the then registrar of cooperative societies, J-K, Syed Ashiq Hussain -- deputy registrar cooperative societies, and others in creating the fake society in 2018-19 in order to obtain a loan from the bank, officials said.

Ex-DC Booked For Approving...

preliminary verification into a written complaint lodged by inhabitants of Gutlipora, Hyhama tin the border district.

The complainants had alleged that in brazen violation of rules, the authorities had issued NOC to a crusher/hot mix plant in 2017 to one M/S National Infra Construction Company Gutlipora Kupwara, a Crime Branch spokesperson said. The complainants further alleged that the revenue records of the land on which the plant was established had been manipulated by the then revenue authorities.

"After conducting a preliminary verification including spot inspection etc. into the matter prima facie found that the allegations are substantiated," the Crime Branch spokesperson said.

During the probe, he said it was revealed that the M/S National Infra Construction Company Gutlipora, Hyhama, a partnership firm, had sought registration with the DIC Kupwara for establishing Stone Crusher/Hot Mix Plant.

"The registration of the plant was to be governed by the Government Order (No. 104/Ind of 2015 dated 14.07.2015), where under the Plant Holder was required to seek the NOCs from the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara regarding ownership of land, etc, State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) regarding Pollution Control, Geology and Mining regarding location, feasibility and availability of raw material, Forest Department, I&FC and Fisheries Department. The then Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara had "illegally" issued NOC in favour of the Plant on 27 March 2017 in violation of the standing laws and rules regulating the establishment of such plants," the spokesperson said.

The Plant, he said was registered in the name of partnership firm, which was not having the required title over the land.

"During the verification, it also surfaced that the land on which the alleged illegal plant was set up was Abi-Awal, but the District revenue officers/officials manipulated the nature and the character of the land by showing same as Gair Mumkin Shart in violation of section 133A Land Revenue Act Svt. 1996 read with the Government Policy regarding change of land use issued vide Govt. Order No. 138-Rev (S) of 2016 dated 07.10.2016 to extend undue favor to the beneficiaries," the spokesperson said.

He added that the verification also revealed that General Manager, DIC, Kupwara provided registration to the Plant without the required NOCs from Fisheries and Forest Department.

"The Officers/Officials of SPCB, Geology & Mining, Forest, I&FC were also found to have illegally issued NOCs in violation of Government orders, rules and regulations framed thereunder for the purpose," he said.

"The then Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, also failed to take any further action against the illegal operation of the plant as was mandated under Government Order No. 104/Ind of 2015 dated 14.07.2015, when the complainants and residents brought the issue to his notice," he added.

The Crime Branch spokesperson said that following the verification, the FIR has been registered against the then Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara; then Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara; District revenue Officers/Officials; then General Manager District Industries Centre (DIC) Kupwara; then Officers/Officials of State Pollution Control Board (SPCB); then District Officers/Officials of Geology and Mining Department, then Officers/Officials of Forest Department; then Agriculture Officer, Kupwara and beneficiaries including Haji Mohabbat Ali Khan son of Rehmatullah Khan resident Shortpora Hyhama, Kupwara and others for setting up a Stone Crusher/Hot Mix Plant illegally at Gutlipora, Hyhama Kupwara.

'How Long Must We Wait?'...

United Nations and empowerment of the world body are essential for the welfare of the world.

The prime minister's strong push for UN reforms and the much-delayed expansion of the powerful Security Council came as India will begin its two-year term as an elected non-permanent member of the 15-member Council from January 1 next year.

"For how long will India be kept out of the decision-making structures of the United Nations? How long would a country have to wait particularly when the transformational changes happening in that country affect a large part of the world?" Modi asked.

He said that while it is a fact that the faith and respect that the United Nations enjoys among the 1.3 billion people in India is "unparalleled", it is also true that the people of India have been waiting for a long time for the process for the reforms of the United Nations to get completed.

"Today, people of India are concerned whether this reform-process will ever reach its logical conclusion," he said, adding that every Indian today, while seeing the contribution of India in the world organisation, aspires for India's expanded role in the United Nations.

"Reform in the responses, in the processes, and in the very character of the United Nations is the need of the hour," he emphasised.

India has been spearheading decades-long efforts to reform the Security Council, saying a structure set up in 1945 does not reflect contemporary realities of the 21st Century and is ill-equipped to handle current challenges.

There is widespread support, including by four out of the five permanent members of the Security Council - US, UK, France and Russia - for a permanent seat for India at the Council.

Modi said India is a country which is the largest democracy of the world, with more than 18 per cent of the world population, has hundreds of languages, dialects, many sects and ideologies, which was a leading global economy for centuries and also endured hundreds of years of foreign rule.

"When we were strong, we were never a threat to the world, when we were weak, we never became a burden on the world, he said.

Modi emphasised that the world of today is a completely different era from the world of 1945 when the global situation, sources-resources, problems-solutions were all quite different.

"With the changing times, if we don't change, then the drive needed to bring change will also get weakened, he said.

An objective assessment of the performance of the United Nations over the last 75 years would yield several stellar achievements but at

the same time, there are also several instances that point to the need for a "serious introspection of the work of the United Nations, he said.

"Several terrorist attacks shook the world and rivers of blood have continued to flow by, he said.

"During those times and even today, can we suggest that efforts of the United Nations to tackle these issues were sufficient, he said.

Modi said India will not hesitate to raise its voice against the enemies of humanity, including terrorism, smuggling of illegal weapons, drugs and money-laundering, and will always speak in support of peace, security and prosperity.

"Starting from January next year, India will also fulfill its responsibility as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. I express my gratitude to all fellow member states who have bestowed this trust upon India, he said, referring to the overwhelming support the country received during the election in June.

"As the world's largest democracy, we will bring our years of rich experience for the benefit of the whole world," he added.

Modi underscored that the ideals on which the UN was founded and India's own fundamental philosophy has a lot of commonality and are not different from each other.

"Within the halls of the United Nations, one has often heard the words the world is one family", he said, adding that it is part of India's culture, character and thinking to treat the whole world as one family.

"In the United Nations too, India has always given priority to the welfare of the whole world, he said, outlining that India has sent its brave soldiers to about 50 peacekeeping missions the world over to keep peace and in the course of maintaining peace, has lost the maximum number of its brave soldiers.

"India's experiences, and India's developmental journey marked with its ups and downs will only add to strengthening the path to global welfare, he said.

"In the changed circumstances of the post-pandemic era, we are moving forward with the vision of a Self-reliant India", which will also be a force multiplier for the global economy, he said.

"In its journey towards progress, India wants to learn from the world as well as share its own experiences with the world," Modi added.

This year's high-level UN General Assembly is being held in a largely virtual format due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, T S Tirumurti, introduced Modi's pre-recorded statement from the General Assembly Hall.

Imran Wants UN Force Sent...

on Friday, Khan introduced the new tactic, saying, "The Security Council must prevent a disaster conflict (in Kashmir) and secure the implementation of its own resolutions, as it did in the case of East Timor."

In the East Timor model, the Security Council authorised an international force under Australia to keep order there in the aftermath of Indonesia's invasion to enforce the Council's resolutions and help create a transitional administration to ensure the independence of Timor in 1999 and oversee the elections. The next year, UN peacekeepers took over from the international force in what is now Timor-Leste.

Again in 2006, the UN sent in peacekeepers to restore order after a failed coup and widespread unrest.

How it would apply to Pakistan would not be what Khan imagines.

The prime Security Council resolution -- No. 47 passed in 1948 -- demands that Pakistan first withdraw its troops and citizens from Kashmir.

The plebiscite that Jawaharlal Nehru had initially agreed to could not be held because Pakistan would not comply with the pre-condition set in that resolution.

Subsequently, India held elections in Kashmir, which New Delhi says affirmed its accession to India.

East Timor was a Portuguese colony and the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) was fighting for independence. When a coup overthrew the Salazar regime in Portugal, Fretilin declared independence in 1975.

Indonesia immediately invaded it and held on till 1999 and later the rebels fought backed by Indonesia.

After the UN-sponsored referendum, trouble arose in 2006, when UN sent peacekeepers again.

If there was a parallel to Timor, it would be the removal of Pakistanis from Kashmir to comply with Security Council Resolution 47.

Gondola Service To Resume...

Gondola cable car service in tourist resort of Gulmarg on weekends beginning Sunday.

According to an official spokesperson, the Gondola phase-I will operate twice a week on Saturday and Sunday from Gulmarg to Kongdoori. The resumption of the Gondola service will be carried out following requisite Covid-19 protocols, including social distancing, sanitization of cabins before and after boarding and de-boarding of passengers, compulsory wearing of masks by all and other safety measures.

"No tourist shall be allowed to board the Gondola without wearing of masks and any tourist with temperature exceeding 99° Celsius shall not be allowed to enter the premises of the ropeway. This is for the information of tourists visiting Gulmarg," the official spokesperson added.

J&K Reports 17 More Covid-19...

in Udhampur district died in the GMC Jammu along with a 62-year-old man, a chemist, also from same area.

Also, a 68-year-old man from Kishtwar town died in the District Hospital due to acute respiratory distress and bilateral Community Acquired Pneumonia.

They said that an 88-year-old man from village Barwal in Kathua district died of multiple ailments.

Among those who died in Valley includes a 78-year-old man Duderhama Ganderbal who died at SKIMS Soura. A doctor at the tertiary care hospital said that the man was admitted on September 18 and died today.

He said a 55-year-old man from Awantabihawan Srinagar also died at SKIMS Soura, five days after he was admitted there. "He was suffering Covid Pneumonia with Sepsis with septic shock and had COD cardiopulmonary arrest," the doctor added. (With GNS inputs)

Newborn Among 1217 More ...

officials from Kashmir Valley. Giving the district wise details of new cases, the officials said that Srinagar reported 180, Budgam 47, Baramulla 46, Pulwama 58, Anantnag 28, Bandipora 19, Kupwara 73, Ganderbal 26, Kulgam 15, Shopian 5, Jammu 301, Rajouri 63, Udhampur 41, Kathua 41, Doda 88, Samba 21, Poonch 64, Ramban 16, Reasi 32 and Kishtwar 53. Meanwhile, officials said 1937 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals 1154 from Jammu Division and 783 from Kashmir Valley.

Geelani Cautions Pak Against...

the Kashmir territory under its control and maintaining the status

quo has been in line with both the aspirations on the Kashmiri people and the spirit of the UN resolutions," Gilani said.

"In fact, it has played a vital role in keeping the Kashmir dispute alive on the UN agenda. However, the recent unfortunate decision to grant Gilgit and Baltistan the status of a provincial province represent a major shift in Pakistan's so far consistent policy," he added.

The ailing leader's representative further said that while the local population in Gilgit and Baltistan may have some genuine grievances and concerns and Pakistan is duty bound to address them, he believes the purpose could have been efficiently and sufficiently served without altering the status quo.

"The move, in our view, is laden with disastrous consequences. Pakistan risks not only weakening its position and losing moral high ground but also demoralizing Kashmiri people and debilitating their ongoing struggle for the right to self-determination," he said.

Terming the move to grant provincial status to Gilgit-Baltistan as unfortunate and unwise, Gilani said that Pakistan was handing India a baton to beat it with vis-à-vis August 5, 2019 decision.

"India would welcome this opportunity as a blessing in disguise and use it to justify its August 5, 2019 decision of revoking Kashmir's special status and merging it," he said.

Gilani, who was recently nominated as the representative of the ailing leader, urged the government of Pakistan to rethink the decision granting provisional provincial status to Gilgit and Baltistan keeping in view all aspects, particularly, the possible "detrimental repercussions" it would have on the future of Kashmir as a "dispute and, consequently, on its final settlement".

Ground Situation In Ladakh...

his recently released book 'The India Way'.

The situation in eastern Ladakh escalated manifold after 20 Indian soldiers were killed in clashes in the Galwan Valley on June 15. The Chinese side acknowledged suffering casualties, but it is yet to divulge details.

The situation further deteriorated following at least three attempts by soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to "intimidate" Indian troops along the northern and southern banks of the Pangong lake area in the last three weeks where even shots were fired in the air for the first time at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in 45 years.

As the tensions escalated further, Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi held talks on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meet in Moscow on September 10 where they reached a five-point agreement to defuse the situation in eastern Ladakh.

The agreement was the basis for the sixth round of Corps commander-level talks on Monday which was also attended for the first time by a joint secretary from the Ministry of External Affairs.

The agreement that aimed at ending the tense standoff included measures like quick disengagement of troops, avoiding action that could escalate tensions, adherence to all agreements and protocols on border management and steps to restore peace along the LAC.

LAHDC Polls: Ladakh Leaders...

Chering Dorjay Lakrook & other public representatives of Union Territory of Ladakh in New Delhi."

However, there has been no official word about the issues discussed at the meeting.

A Home Ministry official said several issues and demands were discussed in the meeting. On September 22, the recently floated People's Movement for Sixth Schedule for Ladakh, a powerful platform representing various politicians, religious and social organisations, announced the 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 organisation had said it will boycott the 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, a veteran politician and former Lok Sabha MP Thupstan Chhewang said.

Saturday's meeting was also attended by Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju, Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and Director of Intelligence Bureau Arvind Kumar. Highlighting the demand for legislative assembly, the group had said that the two existing Autonomous Hill Development Councils in Leh and Kargil districts should be sufficiently empowered to make necessary legislations and rules for areas under their jurisdiction with elected representatives having the final say.

When the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two Union Territories after abrogation of Article 370, it was announced that the UT of Jammu and Kashmir would have a legislative assembly but UT of Ladakh would not have any legislature.

People's Conference Expels...

4, 2019, at the Gupkar residence of NC president Farooq Abdullah. Pertinently, in an interview, when asked does he still agree with the BJP that claims Abdullah's and Muftis have created a mess in Kashmir, Sajad Lone said that he doesn't agree with the BJP discourse.

"As far my statements are concerned, No, I don't stand by them anymore. I withdraw all my statements. We may fight it out in the future but we will not allow our differences to facilitate non-Kashmiris coming to rule us, to slander us, to humiliate our people."

Meanwhile, Mattu, in a series of tweets, said the association with the JKPC ended due to his differences with the party on certain stands and issues.

I'm glad the speculations have ended and there is a confirmation from both sides today that my association with @JKPC_ has come to an end. This is something that has evolved over the last couple of months due to my differences on certain stands and issues, the former Srinagar Mayor posted on Twitter.

Mattu said he believed the party's investment in the 'Gupkar Declaration' is and will be reciprocated only by insincerity and disingenuity by the National Conference.

The resolution at the end of the meet on August 4, 2019, a day before the Centre announced its decision of revocation of J&K's special status and its split into two union territories, said the parties unanimously resolved that they would be united in their resolve to protect and defend the identity, autonomy and special status of Jammu and Kashmir against all attacks and onslaughts.

A year later, on August 22 this year, the political parties issued another joint statement saying they adhere to the last year's declaration. Mattu said, I, however -- strongly -- believe that the party's investment in the Gupkar Declaration is and will be reciprocated only by insincerity and disingenuity by the JKNC -- and this time will prove. NC's blatant insincerity started with SMC but won't end there. Mark

my words.

He said the complicity of today's vanguards and yesteryear's facilitators of erosion and disempowerment cannot be erased or wished away.

I am of the firm opinion that we can't allow August 5th to whitewash history and assume our history starts here. The complicity of today's vanguards and yesteryear's facilitators of erosion and disempowerment -- that can't be erased or wished away. That's the limited point, Mattu said in another tweet.

The former JKPC spokesperson, however, said he will continue to cherish his personal bond and association with JKPC chairman Sajad Gani Lone.

Mattu had joined the JKPC after winning the low key mayoral polls of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) in 2018. He had quit the NC in September that year to contest the local bodies polls.

J&K's Power Purchase Deficit...

charges assessed, collected and the balance outstanding against all the 29 power projects in J&K was not available with the department responsible for assessment and collection, CAG said.

"Only Rs 3,971.63 crore, 67 per cent of the assessed amount of Rs 5,950.55 crore in respect of 17 power projects had been recovered. Out of the total expenses of Rs 4,159.85 crore from the water usage charges fund, 2.40 per cent were allocated for creation of assets, 80.25 per cent were used for purchase of power.

"Purpose for which Rs 721.56 crore (17.35 percent) had been transferred to the Common Pool Account, could not be ascertained," the report said.

It said the revenue from water usage charges had proved to be only an additional resource mobilisation by J&K Government, especially for power purchase, and has not served the purpose of establishment and buying back of hydro electric projects and for capital investments in transmission and distribution network.

JKPCC Pulled Up For Poor...

work on competitive tender basis, the CAG said in its report on revenue sector and PSU (social, general and economic sectors) on the government of J&K for the year ending March 31, 2017, which was tabled in Parliament this week.

JKPCC was incorporated with the objective of execution of construction works for the state and central governments and PSUs, carry on the business of builders, contractors, engineers, architects, surveyors, estimators and designers in J&K and curb monopoly of private contractors and provide healthy competition between private and public sectors.

"The company had finalised its accounts up to 2010-11 only. The value of works done decreased from Rs 364.19 crore during 2012-13 to Rs 250.65 crore during 2016-17. It suffered loss of Rs 3.95 crore and Rs 11.69 crore during 2014-15 and 2015-16, respectively, the report said. It said the shortfall in achievement of targets of value of works done remained between 29 and 50 per cent. "Funds ranging between 58.52 per cent and 75.55 per cent only were utilised on works during 2012-17".

The report said the service tax of Rs 5.14 crore paid in excess had neither been reconciled nor refund thereof received.

"The company had not submitted revised cost offers, to the extent of Rs 22.66 crore, to reflect enhanced rate of service tax and made payment of service tax at the enhanced rate without actual recovery of Rs 3.45 crore from the project authorities," the report said.

It said the company was dependent on the state departments and agencies for works on nomination basis and had failed to secure any work on competitive tender basis.

"The quantum of new works obtained declined during 2012-16 from Rs 349.48 crore to Rs 236.03 crore, but increased during 2016-17 to Rs 696.64 crore. Execution of works in excess of the funds released by the project authorities led to accumulation of outstanding balance of Rs 188 crore as of March 2017 and loss of interest of Rs 26.56 crore," it said.

The delay in completion of works led to increase in cost to the extent of Rs 360.87 crore which was mainly due to poor monitoring by company and slow progress.

It said the company had not framed any recruitment and promotion policy and staff had been deployed at different units in an ad hoc manner. The report said JKPCC did not devise any mechanism for ensuring continuous monitoring and internal control.

"Weak quality control, inadequacy of internal audit and variations amongst performance reports were observed," the report said.

Jammu and Kashmir had 30 working PSUs (27 companies and three statutory corporations) and three non-working PSUs.

The working PSUs recorded a turnover of Rs 8,357.91 crore as per their finalised accounts as of September 30, 2017.

As on March 31, 2017, the investment (paid-up capital, free reserves and long-term loans) in 33 state PSUs and statutory corporations was Rs 7,426.67 crore, the report said adding the power sector accounted for 43.47 per cent (Rs 3,228.68 crore) of the total investment as on March 31, 2017.

The total investment consisted of 21.70 per cent towards paid-up capital and 78.30 per cent as long-term loans, it said.

It said the investment has grown by 45.08 per cent from Rs 5,119.04 crore in 2012-13 to Rs 7,426.67 crore in 2016-17.

Cross-LoC Shelling Rattles...

The cross-border shelling between the two sides was going on when last reports were received.

However, there was no immediate report of any casualty on the Indian side, he said.

Militant, OGW Arrested: Police...

arrested a Lashkar-e-Taiba militant associate in Mandigam Kralgund area of north Kashmir's Handwara.

In a statement, the police said that on the basis of specific information regarding the movement of militant associate, Police, army and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation in the orchards of Mandigam Kralgund.

"During search/ checking one person was found in suspicious condition who on seeing the search party tried to escape from the spot but was chased and apprehended by the search party," the police spokesperson said.

He identified the alleged OGW as Akeel Ahmad Parray son of Wali Mohd resident of Mandigam Kralgund.

The statement further said that arms and ammunitions were recovered from his possession.

"During questioning it came to surface that the said person is working with militant outfit LeT as an associate. In this context Case FIR No. 90/2020 U/s 7/25 I.A.Act., 16, 18,20 ULAP Act has been registered in Police Station Kralgund. Further investigation into the matter is under process," the police said.

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News Digest

Magnitude 4.5
Quake Jolts J&K

Srinagar: A medium-intensity earthquake hit Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, but there were no reports of any damage or loss of life, officials said. The earthquake of 4.5 magnitude occurred at 12:02 pm at a depth of 120 km. There were no reports of any damage to property or injury or loss of life, they added.

Cross-LoC Shelling
Rattles Rajouri

Jammu: India and Pakistan troops on Saturday exchanged gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistani troops on Saturday violated ceasefire by resorting to firing and shelling on forward areas along the LoC in Rajouri district, a defence spokesman said. The shelling and firing from across the border in Nowshera sector was "unprovoked" and drew a befitting retaliation by the Indian Army, the spokesman said. "At about 11.15 am, Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera," the spokesman said. ● P-02

BSF Officer Dies
During Patrolling

Srinagar: Border Security Force (BSF) officer collapsed and later succumbed while on duty in the high security Raj Bhawan area of Srinagar city. The incident happened on Saturday. Police sources said Hayat Singh, assistant sub-inspector belonging to 163 BSF battalion, collapsed while on patrolling duty in the Raj Bhawan area of Srinagar city. "He was shifted to the unit headquarter hospital where doctors said he was dead on arrival. "An FIR has been registered in the incident, proceedings under CrPc have been started", sources said.

Militant, OGW
Arrested: Police

Srinagar: Police on Saturday claimed to have arrested a militant and an over-ground worker (OGW) in two separate operations from Anantnag and Kupwara districts of the Valley. In a joint operation in the Kapran area of Dooru in the south Kashmir district, state forces arrested a categorised active militant, Talib Bhat, a resident of Dehrua, a police official said. He said weapons and other incriminating material were seized from his possession. A case has been registered and investigation taken up, the official said. Police also said that it ● P-02

Teen Girl Ends Life In Uri

Srinagar: A teenage girl on Saturday allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself in her house in the border town of Uri in Baramulla district. The 14-year-old girl was found hanging with a ceiling fan in her home in Parapillan village of Uri on Saturday morning, reports said. Her parents were reportedly out when she allegedly strangled herself. Station House Officer (SHO) Uri, Mohammad Ashraf said that she was suffering from mental depression and was taking medicine for the same. "Her parents were out when she took this extreme step," he said. The body of the deceased has been handed over to the family after the post-mortem, he said. Meanwhile, Police have initiated inquest proceedings under Section 174 CrPc.

Rs 250-Cr Bank Fraud: KAS
Officer Among 2 Suspended

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Saturday suspended two senior officials pending an inquiry into their conduct in a case pertaining to Rs 250-crore bank fraud, officials said.

The administration suspended Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) officer Mujib-ur-Rehman Ghassi, Special Secretary to the Government, Industries and Commerce Department, and Ashiq Hussain, Deputy Registrar Cooperative Societies J-K, pending an inquiry against them, they said.

The officials said two separate suspension orders were issued on September 26 against the officials by the General Administration Department (GAD).

The officials said Ghassi will remain attached with the GAD during the period of his suspension, while Hussain shall remain attached in the office of the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir.

The names of both the officials were mentioned in a case, registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on August 25, related to Rs 250 crore loan to a non-existent cooperative housing society two years ago.

The ACB produced a charge-sheet



File Photo

Ex-DC Booked For Approving
'Illegal' Stone Crusher

The Crime Branch on Saturday filed a case against former Deputy Commissioner Kupwara and several officials and others for allowing illegal construction of a stone crusher and hot mix plant in the frontier district.

According to a Crime Branch spokesperson, a case FIR No (35/2020 u/s 447,468,120B RPC and Section 5(2) Prevention of Corruption Act Svt. 2006) was filed after conducting a

against three persons, including a former chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Bank, for sanctioning a Rs 250 crore loan to a non-existent cooperative housing society. The ACB filed the charge-sheet against Mohammad Shafi Dar, the then chairman of J-K State Cooperative Bank Limited (JKSTCB), Hilal Ahmad Mir, chairman of non-existent River Jhelum Cooperative House Building Society, Srinagar, and Abdul Hamid Hajam, secretary of the non-existent River Jhelum Cooperative House Building Society, Srinagar, according ● PAGE 02

THE NAMES OF BOTH THE OFFICIALS WERE MENTIONED IN A case, registered by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on August 25, related to Rs 250 crore loan to a non-existent cooperative housing society two years ago.

People's
Conference Expels
Junaid Mattu

SRINAGAR: Peoples Conference led by Sajad Ghani Lone Saturday announced expulsion of its senior leader Junaid Mattu from the party.

"J-K Peoples Conference would like confirm that Mr. Junaid Mattu is no longer associated with the party. The party's association with Mr. Mattu ended weeks back," PC said in a tweet.

Mattu was the party chief spokesperson prior to his disassociation. A source in the PC revealed that Mattu had developed differences with the party leader on the Gupkar Declaration- a resolution issued after an all-party meeting on August ● P-02

LG Meets Rajnath
Singh In New Delhi

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Saturday met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi. Office of the Raksha Mantri tweeted a picture of the meeting earlier today.

"The Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Manoj Sinha meeting Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh in New Delhi," Office of the Raksha Mantri tweeted.

Sinha on Saturday announced a relief package of Rs 1350 crore for Jammu and Kashmir in a bid to boost the business and the other ailing sectors that have suffered huge losses for several years in the newly formed Union Territory (UT).

Gulmarg Receives First
Snowfall Of Season

SRINAGAR: The popular ski destination of Gulmarg in north Kashmir on Saturday received the first snowfall of the season.

The light snowfall has given a new look to Gulmarg which remains deserted following August 5 last year due to lockdown following abrogation of Kashmir's semi-autonomous status.

Meanwhile rains lashed Srinagar and parts of Kashmir valley bringing temperatures further down.

Gondola
Service To
Resume Today

The Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday announced resumption of the first phase of ● P-02

According to the Director Department of Meteorology, Sonum Lotus weather is likely to change further towards the first week of October.

Ground Situation In Ladakh Very
Complicated: Jaishankar

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Amid the border standoff with China in eastern Ladakh, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said it was an ongoing issue and "we need to have trust in our armed forces and their ability to secure our interests".

Jaishankar said there is also a need to have trust in the ability of the system -- both military commanders and the diplomatic channels -- in negotiating with the Chinese.

Asked about the situation at the border in eastern Ladakh, Jaishankar told Times Now in an interview:



"You know this is going to play out. There will be things which China has done. There will be responses that India has made...There are actually negotiations on the way."

"I understand the compulsions on media to know everything yes-

Time To Make India
Part of UNSC: PM
'How Long Must
We Wait?'

NEW DELHI (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday questioned for how long will India, the world's largest democracy and home to 1.3 billion people, be kept out of the decision-making structures of the United Nations, asserting that reform in the responses, processes and in the very character of the global body is the "need of the hour."

In his pre-recorded video statement to the landmark General Debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly, Modi said the stability in the ● P-02

Imran Wants
UN Force Sent
To Kashmir

UNITED NATIONS: During his speech in the high-level session of the United Nations General Assembly that was met by an Indian walkout, Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday requested the Security Council to intervene with a UN force in Kashmir.

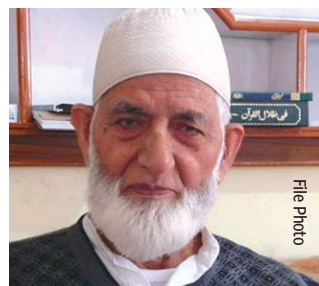
In a subtly worded sentence slipped into his speech ● P-02

Geelani Cautions Pak Against Changing
Status Quo Of Gilgit-Baltistan

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Days after Pakistan announced dates for assembly elections in Gilgit-Baltistan, part of erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, the former Hurriyat Conference Chairman and ailing separatist leader Syed Ali Geelani on Saturday said that any changes in the status quo of the Pakistan-controlled region will have "disastrous consequences" on long pending Kashmir issue.

In a statement issued by Geelani's representative Saiyyed Abdullah Gilani said that the entire territory of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, including Kashmir, Jammu, Ladakh,



File Photo

Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and Gilgit and Baltistan is a "disputed region" and its permanent status can be determined only through a free and fair plebiscite under the aegis of the United Nations.

"This is the position the United Nations has taken and maintained through its several resolutions and all the parties to the dispute, that is, Pakistan, India and Kashmiri people have also agreed to it," he said.

Geelani's representative alleged that over these years, India backtracked from its commitment and continued to keep Kashmir under its "illegal occupation through oppression and repression", while Pakistan and Kashmiri people have firmly stuck to their position and remained on the same page in respect to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

"Pakistan's policy to abstain from consolidating any part of ● PAGE 02

LAHDC Polls: Ladakh Leaders
Meet HM, Deadlock Likely To End

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: An influential organisation from Ladakh, which had threatened to boycott the upcoming elections to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Leh, is likely to participate in the poll process after its meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah here on Saturday, sources said.

A formal announcement to this effect is likely to be made by the People's Movement for Sixth Schedule for Ladakh and representatives of the Union govern-



Image for representation

ment on Sunday, they said. After the delegation's meeting, the Home Minister's Office tweeted, "Home Minister @AmitShah met with former MP Thupstan Chhewang, former MP Thiksay Rinpoche, former minister ● PAGE 02

In FOCUS

J&K's Power Purchase Deficit At Rs 14,871 Cr In 2012-17

JAMMU: The CAG's performance audit of power purchase agreements and electric revenue collection for 2012-13 to 2016-17 have brought out deficiencies in Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD).

The CAG in its report has flagged short comings in power purchase planning, signing and operationalisation of power purchase agreements, and collection of revenue. Besides, it also pointed out financial mismanagement and weakness in internal control.

J&K suffered a power purchase deficit of Rs 14,871 crore during 2012-17. As against an expenditure of Rs 24,299 crore incurred on power

purchase during 2012-17, revenue realisation from sale of power was only Rs 9,428 crore, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) said in its report on 'Social, General, Economic (Non-PSUs) Sectors' for the year ended 31 March 2017.

"The department (PDD) failed to meet its power requirement and the gap between unrestricted demand and self-generation available to the state ranged between 77 per cent and 84 per cent.

"Around 73 per cent to 76 per cent of the power requirement of the state was met through purchase from Central Generating Stations," the report, tabled in the Parliament this week, said.



Image for representation

It said JKPDD incurred an extra expenditure of Rs 840 crore on power purchased during 2012-17 due to deficiencies in planning and non-optimisation of power purchase cost.

"The JKPDD made an avoidable payment of Rs 1,420.26 crore towards late payment surcharge and lost the opportunity to avail rebate of Rs 297.92 crore due to deficient

financial management. It also had to shell out Rs 33.67 crore towards fixed charges without availing power due to imposition of regulation for delayed payments," the report said.

Due to non-completion of transmission infrastructure for evacuation of power, the report said, the department made an avoidable payment of Rs 543.47 crore towards idle capacity charges and energy charges on deemed generation to two power projects.

"Poor collection efficiency resulted in recoverable revenue of Rs 2,508.23 crore ending March 2017," it said.

JKPDD failed to recover its power purchase cost due to operational inefficiencies like increasing gap

between average cost of supply and average billing rate, high aggregate technical and commercial losses, which were at 62.56 per cent in 2015-16 and increased to 67.63 per cent in 2016-17, which resulted in foregone revenue of Rs 10,176 crore.

The report said the department failed to implement revised tariff order approved by the Jammu and Kashmir State Electricity Regulatory Commission, resulting in loss of Rs 10.06 crore to the state exchequer.

"The department had not devised any mechanism for filing objections on petitions filed by the generators," it said.

Meanwhile, the consolidated position of water usage ● PAGE 02

JKPCC Pulled
Up For Poor
Performance

The Jammu and Kashmir Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) Limited came up for sharp criticism from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) for its poor performance and failure to finalise its accounts amid sharp decline in the value of works from Rs 364.19 crore in 2012-13 to Rs 250.65 crore during 2016-17. The public sector undertaking (PSU) firm was dependent on the state government departments or agencies for works on nomination basis and had failed to secure any ● P-02

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NO HOLDS BARRED



At the cost of repetition, the proposed model has been picked from the USA and European market and as per statistics a short gain followed by stagnation and depression emerged. Bihar Government also tried the model and the statistics are not convincing.

Farm Bill, Its impact on Jammu & Kashmir

VIQAS MALIK AND ROMAAN MUNEEB

In view of the foregoing, if the benefit of MSP is not offered to the J&K's rice and maize farmer, the remuneration of the farmers would be drastically affected impacting the entire economic system of the region.

The much talked about monsoon session of the Parliament culminated recently but not without controversies, sloganeering and demonstrations. Apart from various other bills that saw the light of the day, the three key farm bills namely Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill and Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, garnered maximum spotlight. Intriguingly, like all other legislations, these bills are very promising, or one may feel that they are being projected that way. The newly introduced laws are stated to be farmer friendly by promising to increase their income and freeing the sector from government control. However, it has caused a major commotion across the country with farmers already hitting the streets despite the pandemic. The government on the other hand asserts that these bills will revolutionize agrarian sector, which collectively constitutes 60% of India's economy and hence the growth of the sector would fundamentally impact overall economy and vice versa.

The government has maintained that these bills will not abolish the traditional Agriculture Produce Market Committee (APMC), popularly known as the "Mandi". The farmer will now have a choice to sell his produce directly to APMC, private players or corporates. However, there are fears that with the envisaged privatization of the agrarian sector, the state-controlled bodies are destined to loose their existence as has been seen in the case of Indian Airlines, Air India, BSNL and so many other PSU's. At the same time, the adversaries to these bills have argued that this system has already failed in the state of Bihar while other so called reforms by the regime like demonetization and GST have done more harm than good. Even in developed economies like USA, studies show that this capitalist free market system has not worked in favour of the farmers and some level of government control is necessary to maintain the equilibrium. The main reason for the extinction of government run players from the market has been the unbeatable marketing warfare by corporate houses. However, successive governments have failed to notice the elephant in the room, which gives these corporates upper hand.

In order to understand the real impact of these laws on the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, one needs to dive deeper in to the framework of these legislations and the agricultural structure of the UT. It deserves notice that approximately 75% of J&K's population is associated directly or indirectly with agriculture or allied activities, 65% of the government revenue comes from agriculture activities when in fact only 30% of its area being under cultivation.

Importantly, Jammu region mostly yields wheat, rice, maize, pulses, fodder and oilseeds while the valley yields paddy and maize in addition to apples, almond, walnut, peach, cherry and saffron. Broadly, J&K's agricultural setup can be classified in two sections - one being premium, which includes apples, almond, walnut, peach, cherry, and saffron and the other being essentials consisting wheat, rice, maize, pulses, fodder and oilseeds.



The Impact of farm bills on the premium sector is expected to be progressive as the harvest is sold at premium prices with fewer price fluctuations. The premium category harvest being region specific and rare provides the farmers a level playing field in negotiating with private buyers. The private buyers can always shift the increase in purchase price under this category on the end user without much fear of impact on the demand. At the same time, this sector could be a pure delight for contractual farming, as the same would increase the export prospects generating greater profits for farmers and private players.

Traditionally, owners of orchards would travel to Delhi with their produce and deal with the bidders through licensed middleman at APMC. With the new system, it is now anticipated that corporates would reach the orchard owners for contractual farming or harvest purchase, thereby reducing the transportation cost and offering better purchase proposals.

On the other hand, the essentials category is destined to adverse impact, benefitting the corporates largely. Rice and Maize being a dominant crop and no mention of the MSP in the newly introduced Bills coupled with tougher competition from Punjab and Haryana would impact the sale of these crops for the farmers of J&K. Needless to mention, the location proximity and infrastructure would make it easier for corporates to choose other states over J&K. In view of the foregoing, if the benefit of MSP is not offered to the J&K's rice and maize farmer, the remuneration of the farmers would be drastically affected impacting the entire economic system of the region.

Another pivotal aspect for essential category farming is assessing contractual farming, which would practically make the farmer or landowner a laborer at his own field. Farmer would be working only to satisfy the contract obligations and without him knowing the agreement would create a proxy ownership of a metro city based corporate house on his land in the valley.

The simultaneous amendment of the Essential

Commodities Act will leave the farmer exploited and prone to unfair negotiations every alternative year. Removing cereals as essential commodity, practically allows storage of cereals in any quantity and is speculated to be used by corporate houses to regulate prices by hoarding and leaving the farmers without a choice. Hence, the farmers would only become more vulnerable.

Another major change that has been bought is ousting the jurisdiction of Civil Courts and resting the powers with the SDM who would appoint a committee for resolving the grievances. Hence putting independence and neutrality of decisions under dark cloud.

How does the future look like?

At the cost of repetition, the proposed model has been picked from the USA and European market and as per statistics a short gain followed by stagnation and depression emerged. Bihar Government also tried the model and the statistics are not convincing.

Although as far as farmers are concerned, the best available advice is formation of better co-operative societies, seeking sound and concrete legal advice before executing contracts and not bowing down before the corporates.

The new laws may leave a tangible demographic impact on the UT of J&K as the farmer might soon shift from Paddy and Maize farming to alternate yields prospecting better monetary compensation; so in 10 years from now while driving across the highway, you don't find men and women in ankle deep water weeding out rice (nendhkaran); just recall what happened 10 years back.

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India's 1991 Moment For Agriculture Sector — Again?

Faheem Jeelani Gundroo

Before the 1991 Economic Reform Bill's final voting in Lok Sabha, the Indian parliament was treated to vintage PV Narasimha Rao performance. Not only did he speak spontaneously, but also used Sanskrit in his speech, calling out the wisdom behind his decision to introduce foreign investment bill. India was breaking from the shackles of British License Raj and bureaucratic hurdles at that time. In a way, if the modes of functioning of Indian economy were the brain child of Jawaharlal Nehru, PV Narasimha Rao was its modern architect.

The 1991's 15th July voting was done in a democratic way, where opposition holding its right, decided to walk out. However, as the non-BJP parties clearly did not want the government to fall, the bill was passed after much ado. Take to 2020 — BJP has now passed three farmer bills in the Indian parliament without and amid protests from the opposition. It was a mockery of the parliamentary form of government.

There has been a concerted effort in the media, both print and electronic, to paint the farmer's bill revolutionary; comparing it with the foreign investment bill of 1991. Nothing could be far from truth.

Primarily, the circumstances in which the bills were introduced are as different as chalk and cheese. The economic reform's committee had been working on the bill since 1985, when Rajiv Gandhi first gave the impression that he was serious in giving India's

Projected as historic reforms, government promises that the bill gives freedom from middlemen who charge commission in the mandis. If that was the case, why are farmers protesting?

lagging economy a much needed boost. It is another matter that because of Bofors scandal surfacing in 1987, he couldn't carry on with his reforms.

This makes it quite clear that the 1991 bill was well discussed, as it should be in a parliamentary form of government. A strong team of economists helped Manmohan Singh draft the bill. The team included Mr Singh, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, P Chidambaram, and Jairam Ramesh — all experts in the field.

Contrary to it, the Farmer's Bill now, was passed without discussion and with so many loopholes in it that one could fly an air plane through

them. Projected as historic reforms, government promises that the bill gives freedom from middlemen who charge commission in the mandis. If that was the case, why are farmers protesting?

In the food bowl of India: Punjab and Haryana,

farmers have been completely against the bill. BJP fearing that the agitation may spill over to other states, hurriedly formed a program which will explain the benefits of the bill, the details of which, like many other jumlas, the government of India did not care to provide.

While farmers do agree that the functioning of mandis is regressive and has its vices, yet it's an important part of the agriculture eco-system. The middlemen are a source of vital link for farmers in terms of information and quick credit as well, at times. This all will all go to nothing in one stroke.

The reforms seem to be a classic case of the cen-

tre disempowering the states. The government did not consult states at all. Not only this, the most interesting aspect is that most of the states and UTs already have state laws which allow establishing private markets in the agriculture sector.

It seems obvious then that essentially the government through this bill is taking the power from states, introducing its own private corporate mafia, without any regulation from the government. This means that in absence of regulations, private firms can purchase agricultural produce at cheaper prices. The amendments in the commodity act are also worrisome. They're highly biased in favor of private capital and limit appeals to any independent grievances. Even as the government is giving assurances on account of MSP (Minimum Support Price), the promises seem to be hollow. On one hand, government is promising free market to farmers, while on the other, it has banned export of essential products like onions.

It will be interesting to see when the rubber hits the road. In a country that is already economically distressed, the farmer's bill seems to be yet another addition to this government's ill-conceived policies like demonetization and GST.

Faheem Jeelani Gundroo is an ICT Engineer based in Dubai, with interest in travel, history and current affairs. He can be reached at: faheemjeelani@gmail.com

Senior journalist Sajjad Haider, who was elected the President of Kashmir Editors Guild (KEG) has studied engineering in Chennai and later journalism at Tehran University. Haider began his career in 1990 during the first Gulf War, which he covered for Tehran Times. He subsequently took up an assignment for National Iranian Radio and Television and moved to New Delhi. In 1994 he returned to Kashmir and contributed to various international media organizations including BBC online, Deutsche Welle, IRNA and IRIB from Srinagar. In 1997 Sajjad Haider founded the daily Kashmir Observer. In 2006, Sajjad Haider was awarded the prestigious Chevening Fellowship by Great Britain. He studied at the Centre for Security & Diplomacy, Birmingham University. Days after being elected to the coveted position, Haider talked to Tahir Bhat of weekly 'Kashmir Life' about the challenges he will have to address as the leader of the main editors' body. The interview is reproduced courtesy Kashmir Life.

KASHMIR LIFE (KL): Kashmir media is being criticised for its failure in reporting Kashmir properly. How do you respond to this critique?

SAJJAD HAIDER (SH): Kashmir media is journalism of courage. Nowhere do we have an example of newspapers coming out during prolonged curfews with restrictions even on the movement of reporters faced with total communication blockade. Local media was perhaps the only civilian entity alive when everything had frozen under the unprecedented lockdown post-August 5, 2019. We have given a new definition of journalism to the world.

Yet some quarters accuse us of not meeting their expectations. They may be having a point but their observation is flawed. Yes, there are shortcomings. I have no qualms in acknowledging that, but that's because we made newspapers available to our people when our smallest revenue channels had been choked and when there was an outright internet lockdown in place. That's unheard of in the recent memory.

KL: Kashmir Editors Guild had a long spell of dormancy. What were the reasons for that?

SH: Life after August 5, 2019, froze in Kashmir. Which section of society was functional? It's unfair to expect from editors who are part and parcel of the same society to meet and issue statements. Priorities changed and our priority was to bring out newspapers at least to chronicle events in whatever little way possible as we lacked communication with our field reporters and those in towns for months. How we produced a day's copy is a separate story in itself.

KL: As the president of the Kashmir Editors Guild, what are the immediate challenges that you find for yourself?

SH: Although Kashmir media has demonstrated resilience and vivacity but the contemporary political, economic and environment journalism here could very well die a death if it is not already in its death throes. This would not only constitute a tragedy but also a travesty of huge proportions given that a robust media is the lifeblood of any society and polity. We, at the KEG, would want to contribute to both the survival and longevity of media in Kashmir as KEG is a forum of bonafide newspapers which constitute 90 per cent of overall readership within and outside Kashmir both in print and on-line formats.

KL: What are your immediate priorities?

SH: At this delicate moment and time, developing a robust framework and architecture which, among other relevant things, means and entails the cooperation of all newspaper owners and editors to take on the new challenges. Kashmir newspapers have a particu-

In Conversation with Sajjad Haider



“Kashmir media has demonstrated resilience and vivacity but the contemporary political, economic and environment journalism here could very well die a death if it is not already in its death throes. This would not only constitute a tragedy but also a travesty of huge proportions given that a robust media is the lifeblood of any society and polity.”

larly unenviable job to do and there is also a perception issue. Media, particularly newspapers have been vilified perhaps out of naiveté. As I told you earlier, critics have often willfully or due to naivety ignored the challenges newspapers face here. For example, empanelled newspapers all over the world publish advertisements from businesses, trade, corporate, and governments against a set rate. It is no favour but a necessity as these advertisements constitute public information. Apart from the newspaper, the main income that a publisher sells is the newsprint space. That is what the income is all about. Here, vested in-

terests have started converting this into a scandal, and made it sort of a largesse. I think education and public awareness has to be a continuous priority with the editors' body.

KL: Journalists also say that the KEG is in a way not taking any interest in the affairs of the Kashmir Press Club?

SH: Kashmir Press Club is the outcome of strenuous efforts of KEG and it ensured its management is in the hands of an elected body of journalists. KEG was part of the elections. I'm sure elected body of KPC is competent enough to handle affairs there and we

are always at their beck and call.

KL: Every time, there is an incident, the photographers are the first to be attacked. Can KEG intervene in undoing this routine?

SH: Photo journalists in Kashmir are doing an exceptionally great job and their work has received international recognition. It is unfortunate and tragic that in their own homeland they are mistreated and humiliated. They are the frontline reporters and chroniclers of history in action. They deserve not only respect but support as well. It is a matter of great concern for KEG and we are working in tandem with them on it.

KL: How are the turmoil and the lockdown impacting the media in Kashmir?

SH: The situation prevailing in Kashmir post-August 5 has made our job harder. Deprived of high-speed internet, the only mode of communication in these times, newspapers are facing information crisis. At times we could publish little that concerned the ongoing situation. Since there was no counter-narrative available as all shades of political opinion were virtually absent from the scene and the local administration was the only content provider left. This gave the impression that newspapers here were pushing only government narrative. This has dented our credibility among the readers. The vilification campaign only added to the notion that we have compromised on objectivity and independence.

Another grave issue is the financial squeeze. We had to lay off our staff causing disruption in our operations. Many reporters became jobless. This state of affairs is killing journalism in Kashmir. We are fighting both logistical nightmares and misplaced perceptions.

KL: The major newspapers in Kashmir are also being criticised for not having a fair hire and fire policy?

SH: I think all major newspapers are governed by labour laws and any aggrieved person has that option available to lodge a complaint if he or she has been unfairly treated by any member.

KL: Why is the KEG not keeping a better coordination with the media watchdogs in India and outside to safeguard the interests of the journalism in Kashmir?

SH: KEG does have coordination with media bodies outside Kashmir but I admit it needs to be strengthened.

KL: How do you see the challenge that print media is facing from the digital media and how it is being managed by the communication blockade?

SH: The traditional media in Kashmir which is regulated by licence agreements are face to face with unregulated media here which has grown exponentially over the last few years. We also are faced with the challenge of social media where unauthorised news pages and platforms dish out fake or unverified news to fetch likes and traction. They pose a challenge to us because we take some time to verify facts before releasing them. This is a universal issue not exclusive to Kashmir. What is exclusive to Kashmir is that authorities here don't distinguish between digital platforms of established newspapers and those created by social media buffs. At times they are preferred over online editions of local newspapers.

KL: How do you see the new trend of newspapers seeking a donation from people?

SH: It again is a global trend. Producing content that is reliable and authentic comes with a cost. Newspapers have the discretion to charge users for it. So there are subscription modules and donation options made available to readers. I don't see anything wrong in that.

Handshakes, RIP

F.S. AIJAZUDDIN

“Officials were ordered not to shake hands with their communist Chinese counterparts. To avoid doing so, US diplomats at official receptions would nurse their drinks in their right hands.”

COVID-19 is responsible for the death of the handshake. A human gesture of social connection has become the harbinger of disease. Just as the once socially acceptable cigarette now carries the warning 'Smoking kills', a corona-tainted handshake we are cautioned can have equally lethal consequences.

George Bernard Shaw once deflected an overzealous admirer who wished to kiss his hand — the hand that had penned his literature — by telling her that the same hand had done a number of less savoury things. The modern savant Stephen Fry, in his autobiography, recalls hosting the broadcaster Alistair Cooke at Cambridge. “When the evening was over Alistair Cooke shook my hand to say goodbye and held it firmly, saying, ‘This hand you are shaking once shook the hand of Bertrand Russell’.” Fry expressed wonder.

“No, no,” said Cooke. “It goes further than that. Bertrand Russell knew Robert Browning. Russell's aunt danced with Napoleon. That's how close we all are to history. Just a few handshakes away. Never forget that.”

Royals are paid to shake hands. It is part of their job description. Persons invited to shake hands with modern royalty are alerted that they should expect only the tips of royal fingers, not the whole hand, to protect the dignity from bone-crushing enthusiasts.

To some, a hand-folded namaste encourages social distancing.

Over time, royals have mastered the skill of shaking hands without causing themselves discomfort. In old news-reels of the Russian monarchy, for example, one sees Czarina Alexandra Feodorovna (wife of Czar Nicholas II) manage a prize distribution to over a hundred schoolchildren. In a smooth mechanical movement, she held the prize in her palm and, while the recipient kissed the top part of the imperial hand, the czarina dropped the parcel into the child's hands. It was like a bomb being released from a plane's undercarriage.

Her once-removed nephew the future King Edward VIII, on a tour of Canada in the 1920s, was required to meet over a thousand guests at a garden party. He valiantly shook hands with all of them. By evening his hand was so swollen that it had to be put into a sling. Regardless of his condition, though, he was obliged the next day to shake another thousand hands, which he did, with his left hand.

Even within royals, handshakes (or the absence of them) can convey messages. In 1967, at the unveiling of a plaque in memory of Queen Mary at Marlborough House, the normally courteous Queen Elizabeth the



Queen Mother could not bring herself to extend her gloved hand to her estranged sister-in-law the Duchess of Windsor. They had not met since the Duke's abdication as King Edward VIII in 1936. A 30-year-old family feud could have been healed with one gesture of conciliation. Instead, it festered until both died.

Hindu tradition, if some proto-historians are to be believed, anticipated Covid-19 by inventing the hand-folded namaste as an aseptic form of greeting. To them, it is clean, hygienic, and encourages social distancing. Indian prime minister Indira Gandhi found it particularly useful when handling (or not having to handle) her minions, in particular Jagjivan Ram, her untouchable Dalit defence minister.

Perhaps the most absurd example of manual warfare is to be found in the US's relations with communist China. In 1954, John Foster Dulles (then US secretary of state) refused to shake hands with Zhou Enlai at a conference in Geneva. This deliberate snub became policy within the State Department. Its officials were ordered not to shake hands with their communist Chinese counterparts. To avoid doing so, US diplomats at official receptions would nurse their drinks in their right hands.

To rectify that earlier slight, US president Richard Nixon made a symbolic gesture of contrition when he landed at Beijing airport in February 1972. He pointedly extended his hand first to the approaching Zhou Enlai.

According to Sultan M. Khan (Pakistan's ambassador to China, 1966-68), Zhou Enlai, who had a special regard for Pakistan, ensured that Mr Khan was invited to watch the October parade along with Chairman Mao and the Chinese leadership on the ramparts of the Gate of Heavenly Peace (the entrance to the Forbidden City).

Mr Khan recalled that one year, he decided that rather than standing on high with the Chinese leadership, he would mingle with the million or so Chinese milling in Tiananmen Square below. He noticed that whenever any person singled out for the honour of meeting Chairman Mao returned to the square, his hand would be shaken by his comrades, whose hands would in turn be shaken by others. Gradually, concentric ripples passed through the amassed public, as eager hands shook the hands of men who had shaken the hand of the man who had shaken the hand of Chairman Mao.

Unlike Covid-19, handshakes are now history. RIP.

Dawn

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

FFICE OF THE EXECUIVE ENGINEER ANANTNAG PWD(R&B) DIVISION KHANABAL

OF R&B/Khanabal/2020 TENDERING/

Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K

(as the case may be) from approved and eligible Contractors

registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:

	Construction of Lane from house of QadirShiekh to house of MohdShabanWani near Alhadees Masjid at Pahalgam (Ward No 1 M C						
	Construction of Cement Concrete Drain from house of Gh Hassan Lone to House of Feroz Ahmad Lone at LariporaPahalgam (Ward No 2 M C						
	Construction of Cement concrete drain from House of Farooq Ahmad Wani to Hotel Himaliya Discover Resort at GanishbalPahalgam (Ward						
	Tile path from House of Bashir Ahmad Shiekh to House of Ab Rashid Shiekh at (Ward No 7 M C Pahalgam)						
	Construction of Protection bund back side to house of MohdAfzal Lone (Ward No 7 M C Pahalgam)						
	Construction of Cement concrete Tile path from House of KhazarMohdBhatupto link road at GanishbalPahalgam (Ward No 7 M C						
	Construction of Pre Fabricated Hut near Town Hall Pahalgam for Office						
	Construction of Lane from Masjid Shareef to House of G Hassan Bhat by I & II at MakdamporaGanishbalPahalam (Ward 7						
	Construction of Cement concrete Drain from House of AbRahmanWani to House of MohdAfzal Lone at Ganishbal (Ward No 7 C Pahalgam)						
	Repair/Renovation of Toilet Blocks at LariporaKhurad (Ward No 10 & 11						

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

as per schedule of dates given below:

	of Tender Notice		
	wnloading of bidder documents		
	on Start Date		
	e of opening of bid (online)		
	of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Khanabal		

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of (tender inviting authority) (Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / R (Refer Govt. order no. O.M No. A/24 (2017) and Earnest money / Bid security in shape of CDR / FDRpledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Khanabal(Tender receiving authority).

3. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notif and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e bids of Responsive biddersshall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Khanab

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

1. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/1904/MVD/ANG Date:-26/09/2020

NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mr.Gulzar Ahmad Mir S/O Senaullah Mir R/O Sadoora Doora Qazigund (Party No.1st) as Transferor, (Seller) Owner of the Vehicle Truck Bearing Regd. No.JK03B-7411 (Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No. 1888/GC/ANG. and Mr.Shabeer Ahmad Bhat S/O Ghulam Hassan Bhat R/O Zamaalgam Verinag Anantnag(Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with Shriram TPT Finance Co.Ltd.Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection regarding the proposed transfer Amy file his objection within(7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

MJA

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/1903/MVD/ANG Date:-26/09/2020

NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mrs. Hura Jabeen W/O,D/O Abdul Qayoom Khanday R/O Wandaveelgam Anantnag(Party No.1st) as Transferor, (Seller) Owner of the Vehicle Truck Bearing Regd. No.JK03D-9974(Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No.3273/GC/ANG and Mr.Davinder Pal Singh Sodhei S/O Sulendir Singh Sodhei R/O Kanw Bagh Azad Road Baramulla(Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with JK Bank Wandaveelagm Anantnag.Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection regarding the proposed transfer Amy file his objection within(7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

MJA

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION CHADOORA

NOTICE INVITING FRESH TENDER

NIT No: 64/ET/EE/R&B/Chadoora of 09/2020

Fresh to NIT No 7/4th issued under No. 463-75 dated 26/05/2020

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

SN	Name of Work	Adv. Cost inc.c/o store (Rs.in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time of Completion (days)	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	MH Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Construction of damaged approach wall and protection work of bridge at Wadipora Kralcheck road	4.51	200	9020	15	06/10/20	DEE	3054 M&R

Position AA: Accorded Position TS: under process Position Funds: Available

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	25/09/2020
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	25/09/2020
3	Bid submission Start Date	25/09/2020
4	Bid Submission End Date	06/10/2020 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	06/10/2020 at 4.10 PM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document cost in shape of Treasury Challan (Mentioning therein the NIT No. nomenclature of the work and Advertised Cost) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money / Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora (tender receiving authority).

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

As per circular issued by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir Civil Secretariat Finance department vide No OM No. A/24(2017)-651 dated 07/06/2018 which reads as under:-

a) Furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial bids.

b) The cost of tender should be collected by introducing E-Challan or simply uploading a copy of necessary treasury challan/ receipt.

c) Similarly, instead of insisting on actual Call Deposit Receipt, a copy of same duly pledged to the concerned department should be uploaded by the tenderer. However, before allotting the work or issuing the supply order, the original CDR should be obtained and kept on record.

4. Bids must be accompanied with earnest money/ bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledge to Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora / and cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan (Debited to MH: 0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer RNB Division Chadoora showing clearly the name of work along with NIT NO, Advertised Cost & S.No of the work, failing which the tender will be rejected out rightly).

Further if any correction or pencil written found on e-challan shall be rejected out rightly.

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

No: 4427-37
DT: 25/09/2020

DIPK-6361/20

Executive Engineer R&B Division Chadoora

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Sarai Dangerpora Srinagar, KMR

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mr.Zubair Ahmad Malik S/O Ab Salam Malik R/O Sadoora Anantnag(Party No.1st) as Transferor, (Seller) Owner of the Vehicle Alto 800 Bearing Regd. No.JK03H-7232(Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No.Nill and Mr.Farooq Ahmad Dar S/O Ab Majeed Dar R/O Chaki Kamad Anantnag(Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with N/A.Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection regarding the proposed transfer Amy file his objection within(7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

MJA

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTRIC DIVISION BARAMULLA

Fax No/Tel:- 01952-234241 Tel-01952-234480 email:- tsedbla@rediffmail.com

e-NIT No: EDB/12 of 2020-21, Dated: 23/09/2020

STANDARD BIDDING DOCUMENT AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

a)INVITATION:-

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Jammu and Kashmir UT, e-Tenders are hereby invited from registered A class Electrical Contractors registered with Inspection Agency of KPDCIL or any other relevant Government agency enlisted with CPWD, MES, Railway, DGBRO of appropriate class for Rate Contract for labour cum Providing, fixing, Testing, Commissioning for HT/LT improvement by way of replacing Barbed Wire / Undersized conductor/Worn-Out Conductor /Wooden Poles/Wooden Supports etc. within the jurisdiction of Electric Sub Division Watergam as per terms, conditions, technical specifications and schedules forming part of this tender specifications and schedules forming part of this tender document.

A	Date & Time of down loading of Standard Bidding Document	The Standard Bidding Document can be downloaded over http://jk-tenders.gov.in from 25th September 2020;10:00 PM
B	Sale of Bid Document (Start)	25th September 2020;10:00 PM
C	Sale of Bid Document (End)	12th October 2020;04:00 PM
D	Clarifications start date	25th September 2020;10:00 PM
E	Clarifications end date	26th September 2020;04:00 PM
F	e-Bid submission (start) date & time (Submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	26th September 2020;04:00 PM
G	e-Bid submission (end) date & time (Submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	12th October 2020;04:00 PM
H	Online Commercial and Technical e-Bid opening date & Time	14th October 2020;02:00 PM
I	Online financial e-Bid opening date & time (Only of the Commercial & technical qualified bidders)	Will be communicated to the Technical Qualified Bidders
J	Venue of opening of technical & financial e-Bids	EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ELECTRIC DIVISION BARAMULLA
K	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs. 514.00 (Non-refundable)
L	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 12001.00
M	Estimated cost	-----
N	Position of Funds	Authorized

The interested bidders are requested to submit their offer along with terms, conditions, technical specifications and annexures forming part of this tender document.

1. The Bidders are advised to study the Bidding Document carefully. Submission of e-Bid against this SBD shall be deemed to have been done after site visit, careful study and examination of the procedures, terms and conditions of the Standard Bidding Document with full understanding of its implications.

2. The tender document is available at website http://jktenders.gov.in. Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid document, seek clarification and submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the table below.

3. The bidders need to upload the proof/cost of e-Bid document as stated in the above table through Demand Draft (Preferably J&K Bank) pledged to Executive Engineer Electric Division Baramulla, payable at Baramulla. The scanned copy of the Demand Draft must be enclosed along with the e-Bids but the original Demand Draft should be submitted by all the participants with 2 days from the last date of submission of e Bid in the office of Executive Engineer Electric Division Baramulla upon information. No interest would be payable on Earnest Money deposited.

a. Hard Copy of original instrument of EMD shall be submitted by the lowest bidder to the office of the Executive Engineer Electric Division Baramulla.

b. The Financial-bids shall be opened accordingly online on the same Web Site at office of the Executive Engineer Electric Division Baramulla.

4. The e-Bids will be electronically opened in the presence of bidder's representatives, who choose to attend at the venue, date and time mentioned in the above table or any subsequent day to the convenience of the Tender Opening Committee. An authority letter of bidder's representative will be required to be produced.

5. The Executive Engineer Electric Division Baramulla reserves the right to cancel any or all the e-Bids/ the e-Bid process without assigning any reason thereof. The decision of Executive Engineer Electric Division Baramulla will be final and binding.

6. In the event of date specified for e-Bids opening being declared a holiday then the due date for opening of e-Bids shall be the following working day at the appointed time and place.

7. All the required documents excluding Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded by the e-Bidder electronically in the PDF format, whereas Price Schedule/BOQ should be uploaded electronically in the same BOQ sheet provided with the SBD.

8. To participate in e-bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' class III (b) as per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding.

9. If the no. of qualified bidders is equal to 3 then 40% of the work shall be given to L1, else if the qualified bidders is more than 3 then L1 will be given 30% of the work and rest will be distributed equally among other qualified bidders on L1 finalized rates.

10. The allotment of works orders shall be awarded to the contractors after the funds will be made available to this office.

It may be noted that for evaluation purposes the uploaded offer documents will be treated as authentic and final.

DIPK-NB-2609/20

Executive Engineer, Electric Division Baramulla

No: EDB/TO/3879-84
Date d: 23/09/2020

Extend full support to CUK in setting up of varsity at Tulmulla: Div Com to deptt heads

CUK VC details progress of the University

Ganderbal : Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, Shri. P K Pole Saturday directed the district administration Ganderbal and all the heads of the Civil, Electric, Irrigation and Flood Control, Revenue, Jal Shakti, and other departments to extend full support and cooperation to the authorities in the Central University of Kashmir (CUK) for the establishment of permanent structures at the designated campus at Tulmulla here.

"The establishment of Central University of Kashmir is a mega and important project as thousands of students from Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of the Country will be pursuing their higher education in it. Our priority should be to extend fullest support in their endeavour of setting up of the varsity at the permanent campus," Shri. P K Pole said while chairing a meeting of the senior officials of all the concerned and allied departments and the university officials regarding the setting up of the university and allotment of land.

He expressed strong resentment and dismay over the lackadaisical attitude of some central government agencies while executing the works in the Central University of Kashmir. Shri P K Pole said that instead of these outside agencies, the university has to seek help and cooperation from the local experts and engineers who are very well versed with the geography and topog-



raphy of the area. He assured full help from UT to strengthen the varsity's campus development wing and extend help under various government schemes for construction of roads, water supply and electricity. He also assured to provide more land to the varsity and asked DDC Ganderbal to take necessary steps for the same.

Mr Pole also asked the university to conduct fresh survey and prepare a new master plan accordingly, adding that university should now focus on horizontal expansion rather than vertical constructions. Shri P K Pole gave on the spot instructions to the departments for road widening, dredging and to remove the encroachment of the

land, done by certain individuals and asked the concerned to come up with the Detailed Project Reports immediately. He also assured that the administration will look into the matter of providing additional land for construction of utilities for the university.

Welcoming the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir Shri. P K Pole and District Development Commissioner, Ganderbal, Mr. Shafqat Iqbal and others CUK Vice Chancellor, Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir gave comprehensive details about the journey of the university since its inception in the year 2009 on both the academic and infrastructure front. He said that despite

facing several issues and problems on account of functioning from multiple campuses first in Srinagar district and now in Ganderbal district, the university has made a mark on the academics front and is currently offering 35 Postgraduate, Under Graduate /Five year Integrated, Research and Diploma programmes, adding that when compared with the institutions established with it, the Central University of Kashmir is marching ahead of them on academics. However, the Vice Chancellor expressed anguish over the university's inability to construct the permanent structures, according to the already drafted and approved master plan at Tulmulla, citing several reasons, especially the low load bearing capacity of the major chunk of land, transferred by the Government to the university. He said the soil testing report submitted by the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) was faulty and the university has already asked the investigating agencies including the Anti Corruption Bureau and Central Bureau of Investigation to probe the same and book the culprits. Prof. Mehraj ud Din Mir said that several Executing Agencies including NBCC and NPCC have also failed to adhere to the timelines for construction of Pre Engineered Buildings. CUK VC urged the Divisional Commissioner to direct all the concerned departments of the State to provide all the possible and necessary help.

Urdu Essay Competition Samoon distributes awards

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: Jammu and Kashmir Urdu Council today organised a function here to felicitate the winner students of an online Urdu essay competition held in June this year.

Principal Secretary, School Education and Skill Development, Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon was the Chief Guest on the occasion while the award distribution function was presided over by noted cartoonist Bashir Ahmed Bashir.

About 13 participant students including first, second and third besides 10 consolation position holders were awarded with cash rewards, mementos, certificates and books. Hayfa Sajad of Mallison Girls School, Razia Sultan of Zoon Islamic School Hajin, Bandipora and Mehr-o-Muzaffar of Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Seer Hamdan, Islamabad had respectively bagged first three positions in the competition in which students from 196 government and private schools participated.

Seminar Held On New Poetic Genre 'Treyoat'

SRINAGAR, SEPTEMBER 26: The Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages (JKAACL) today organized a seminar to introduce 'Treyoat', a new Poetic Genre in Kashmiri literature created by poet Gulab Saify from Chenab Valley.

Secretary Tourism and Culture Departments, Sarmad Hafeez, who was also chief guest on the occasion, said that the government of Jammu and Kashmir is committed to preserve and promote our regional dialects and literature. He assured full support to the Academy and the literary personalities of the UT towards achieving their goals in the world of literature and culture.

While introducing Treyoat, Poet Gulab Saify said that among all the well established

and commonplace forms of poetry, this new and versatile genre is singularly the one which is devised and based on certain specific word count.

While summarizing the origin of word 'Treyoat' and the style of newly created Genre, he said, the name 'Treyoat' has been taken from classical Sanskrit language. The root word being 'Tri' meaning 3 (three), 'Treyoat', thus refers to a poetic piece "in threes", "of threes", or "comprising three units".

Later, a panel discussion was also held on Treyoat in which prominent poets participated.

The function was attended by Secretary Cultural Academy, Muneer ul Islam, Chief Editor, Mohammed Arhraf Tak, poet, Rafiq Raaz, Shabir Ahmad Shabir and other prominent poets and literary personalities.

Job fair held at ITI Bagh-i-Dilawar Khan

SRINAGAR : A job Fair was organized today at Government Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Bagh-i-Dilawar Khan in which 12 companies and 325 pass outs of the Institute participated for recruitment.

The participating Companies were Jamkash Vehicleads Pvt Limited Hyderabad, ALBA Power Pvt Limited Rangreth, Fungicides

India Limited Rangreth, Kashmir Motora MA Road, Stag Trading International Srinagar, Saheb International Hyderabad, Continental Heating Ventilation & Air Conditioning Rangreth, Oriental Stores Hari Singh High Street, AMCO Constructions Equipment Pvt Ltd Rangreth, Alfa Automobiles Karan Nagar, Metfab Pvt Ltd Rangreth and City Infra Ltd Rangreth.

انتقال پر ملال

یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ اہلیہ مرحوم عبدالرحمان بیگ ساکنہ شمس واری حال قرفلی محلہ میدان مسجد سرینگر مورہ 26 ستمبر 2020 بروز منیچر وار کو مختصر علالت کے بعد اس دار فانی سے رحلت کر گئیں۔ اللہ تعالیٰ مرحوم کو جنت الفردوس نصیب کرے۔ مرحومہ کی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی مورہ 29 ستمبر 2020ء بروز منگلوار صبح 10 بجے اُن کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع مکہ کھاداروگن نیکری کے پاس انجام دی جائے گی۔

سوگواران

ظہور احمد بیگ، مختار احمد بیگ، مشتاق احمد بیگ، محمد امین زرگر

مستورات سے گزارش کہ وہاں ساتھ مشروبات وغیرہ نہ لائیں۔

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Riyaz Ahmad Qadri S/o: Mohammad Maqbool Qadri R/o: Kawoosa Khalsa Magam Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04C-5943 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S HDFC Bank B/U Gole Market Karan Nagar Sgr. Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper.

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.1523
Dated 26-09-2020

MQB Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Office of the Executive Engineer, (Jal Shakti) PHE, Ground Water Division, Nowshera, Sgr.

Gist of e-Tender.

e-N.I.T. No:- PHE/GWDS/31 of 09/2020.

For and on behalf of lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders are invited in two cover system for "Construction of 125 mm dia Machine Drilled Hand pump Wells" at below mentioned place from registered Water Well Drillers/Contractors as per the details given in tender document.

S.No	Name of work	No. of Hand Pump Wells	Est. Cost Rs. in Lacs	EMD (Amount in Rs)	Cost of Tender Document	Time of completion	Programme Languishing
01	Construction of Hand Pump wells at Agglar Near Village Khachker of District Pulwama.	01 No.	Rs. 3.65 Lacs	Rs. 7300/-	Rs. 500/-	30 days	
02	Construction of Hand Pump wells at <Mech H am Hand Pump wells at <Mech H Construction of Hand Pump wells at Putrigam of District Pulwama.	01 No.	Rs. 3.45 Lacs	Rs. 6900/-	Rs. 500/-	30 days	Back to village Back to village

Position of Funds:- Available

Critical Dates/Information.

1.	Publishing Date	25-09-2020 (04:00 P.M)
2.	Period of Downloading of Bids	25-09-2020 (04:00 P.M) to 01-10-2020 (02:00 P.M)
3.	Period of Submission of bids	25-09-2020 (04:00 P.M) to 01-10-2020 (02:00 P.M)
4.	Date of opening of Tender.	03-10-2020 at (12:00 P.M)
5.	Tender Receiving Authority: Executive Engineer . (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Srinagar/Kashmir-190011	
6.	Document Cost : Non-Refundable in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt deposited to Account Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar (at Saddar Treasury Srinagar) (The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)	
7.	Earnest Money: The Earnest Money shown against each constituency in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer, (Jal Shakti) PHE Ground Water Srinagar.	
8.	Bid Validity Period: 180 Days	

No:- PHE/GWDS/2518.
Dated: 25-09-2020.

Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti PHE Ground Water Division,
Srinagar.

DIPK-6348/20

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.

Tele: 01933-247954/247955. Website: www.islamicuniversity.edu.in.

INTERVIEW NOTICE

It is hereby notified for the information of all candidates who have been shortlisted for the post of Assistant Professor, Physics wide Notice No. IUST/Reg/Adm/E/20/601 Dated: 07-08-2020 in response to Advertisement Notice No. 02 of 2019 dated 20.02.2019, that the interview shall be held on **03-10-2020 (10.00 AM)** in the University Campus, Awantipora. The provisional interview call letters to the shortlisted candidates (list available on University website www.iust.ac.in) are being sent on their respective Email Id's and the candidates who do not receive the same shall treat this notice as provisional call to appear for the interview. Candidates are advised to report half an hour before the scheduled time at University Campus, Awantipora along with all documents in original. Candidates who reside outside the Union Territory of J&K and opts for virtual mode of interview are advised to communicate their option in advance by or before **30-09-2020**. No TA/DA shall be paid for appearing in the interview. No: IUST/Reg/Adm/E/20/650 Dated: 26-09-2020

Sd/-
Registrar

Government of India

Department of Telecommunications

O/o the Controller of Communication Accounts, J&K Telecom Circle, HUDCO Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu (J&K)-180012

Website :- www.ccajk.gov.in Email:- ccaik@nic.in, Tel.No: 0191-2477283, Fax. No. 0191-2475858

No.9-24/CCA-JK/2020-21/Pen.Ada./01 Dated:- 23-09-2020

TELECOM DIGITAL PENSION ADALAT AT YOUR DOOR STEPS

1. Special Digital Pension Adalat is scheduled to be held through video calling at 11:00 AM on 13/10/2020 for settlement of pending pension related grievances for more than 6 months (excluding legal and policy matters) of all pensioners of Telecom Department/BSNL Jammu & Kashmir Circle. All the pensioners/family pensioners are requested to kindly forward their pending pension grievances if any along with necessary details on email ccaik@nic.in before 05.10.2020.

2. Pensioners / family pensioners can appear in this Special Digital Pension Adalat through a video call from home at the given time to represent their case. All the pensioners/Family pensioners are requested to kindly provide their Whatsapp mobile number or mobile no. of any family member (who will be available with pensioner/family pensioner) in their complaint.

3. Intimation of time of Whatsapp mobile call will be intimated by this office one day before the Digital Pension Adalat.

4. All future new pension cases will be settled through new pension software 'SAMPANN' of Department of Telecommunication. Regarding this, more information can be obtained from website <https://dotpension.gov.in>. Mobile App for SAMPANN is also available on 'Google Play Store' and 'ios platform' in the name of 'SAMPANN'.

5. Stay healthy and safe at home, we are working to serve you.

Sd/- ACCA
O/O CCA J&K Circle

DIAL-EMMA

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

09 Safar
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 59
ZUHR	12: 22
ASR	4:40
Magrib	6:26
ISHA	7:46

This Day In History

- 1290 - Earthquake in Gulf of Chili China, reportedly kills 100,000
- 1794 - French troops conquer Crèvecoeur
- 1821 - Mexican revolutionary forces led by Agustín de Iturbide occupy Mexico City as Spanish withdraw, bringing an end to the Mexican War of Independence
- 1864 - Battle at Pilot Knob (Ft Davidson) American Civil War, Missouri: 1700 killed/injured
- 1905 - The physics journal Annalen der Physik publishes Albert Einstein's paper "Does the Inertia of a Body Depend Upon Its Energy Content?", introducing the equation E=mc².
- 1938 - League of Nations declares Japan the aggressor against China
- 1940 - Nazi Germany, Italy & Japan sign 10 year formal alliance (Axis)
- 1941 - US launches its 1st Liberty ship, freighter SS Patrick Henry
- 1951 - Persian troops occupy oil refinery at Abadan
- 1953 - Typhoon destroys one third of Nagoya, Japan
- 1961 - Sierre Leone becomes 100th member of UN
- 1973 - Soyuz 12 carries 2 cosmonauts into Earth orbit (2 days)
- 1981 - Iran defends its besieged port of Abadan, driving back Iraqi forces
- 1988 - The National League for Democracy, led by Aung San Suu Kyi is founded in Burma (Myanmar)
- 1991 - US President George H. W. Bush decides to end full-time B-52 bombers alert.
- 1993 - The Sukhumi massacre takes place in Abkhazia.
- 1996 - In Afghanistan, the Taliban capture the capital city Kabul after driving out President Burhanuddin Rabbani and executing former leader Mohammad Najibullah.
- 2001 - At its two-day meeting in Vienna, OPEC decides to keep its production quotas unchanged at 23.2 million barrels per day, despite crude oil being at its lowest price levels since 1999
- 2002 - Timor-Leste (East Timor) joins the United Nations.
- Event of interest Event of interest
- 2008 - CNSA astronaut Zhai Zhigang becomes the first Chinese person to perform a spacewalk while flying on Shenzhou 7.
- 2009 - German Federal elections return Angela Merkel for her second term as Chancellor at head of centre-right coalition government
- 2012 - UN publicly releases documents from China and Japan detailing their contesting claims for the Senkoku Islands
- 2012 - The Mars Curiosity rover discovers what evidence of a fast-moving streambed in Mars
- 2012 - The 2004 Japanese discovery of the 133th element has been confirmed
- 2013 - 7 people are killed in mosque bombings in Baghdad, Iraq
- 2013 - 19 people are killed and 45 are injured in a bus bombing in Peshawar, Pakistan
- 2013 - At least 22 people are killed after a refugee ship capsizes off the island of Java
- 2013 - 60 people are killed after a building collapses in Mumbai, India
- 2014 - 57 people are killed after Mount Ontake erupts in Japan
- 2015 - "Junts per Si" pro-independence alliance win parliamentary majority in Catalonia

From KO Archives

Israeli experts help India's Kashmir ops

Agence France Presse

JERUSALEM - Israeli anti-terrorism experts have been helping India combat Muslim separatists in Jammu and Kashmir, the Israeli daily Haaretz reported Friday.

The despatch of the experts, who Haaretz said were winding up their mission Friday, came three months after a visit to Israel by Home Minister Lai Krishna Advani

India is particularly interested in improving security along its border with Pakistan, especially in Kashmir, and in particular with blocking guerrilla infiltrations, Haaretz said.

The two sides are also discussing the possible purchase by India of Israel's Falcon Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) amid growing defence links between them.

India, which established diplomatic ties with the Jew-ish state in 1992 after a 40-year hiatus, is keen on intensi-fied military cooperation with Israel especially in the field of counter-insurgency.

The Arab world, however, accuses the pair of seeking to develop nuclear ties. Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh visited Israel in June, the same month as Advani.

Kashmir Observer, September 27, 2000

'Masks up, emissions down' as climate demos restart

Agencies

BERLIN: Thousands of young people across Europe joined a global day of climate protests on Friday, many wearing masks and keeping their distance against the coronavirus. The rallies marked the resumption of street protests by the "Fridays for Future" movement, which had kept its actions mainly online in recent months because of the pandemic. Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, who launched the school strikes two years ago, led the protest in Stockholm. The goal was to "build up this pressure on people in power so that something happens", the 17-year-old said outside the Swedish parliament, wearing a white mask emblazoned with

ally, from Iceland to Australia and both online and in the streets depending on virus restrictions. Previous global Fridays for Future demos have seen millions of young people pour into cities to demand action against global warming. In Germany, police said some 10,000 protesters braved the rain to gather at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate. Organisers estimated the figure to be twice as high. Demonstrators clutched umbrellas and carried signs to highlight the climate crisis, while some scribbled messages on their face masks such as "Not a single degree more" and "Unite behind the science". A Berlin police spokeswoman said participants were adhering to hygiene regulations imposed to contain the virus



the Fridays for Future logo. With Sweden's coronavirus rules limiting crowd sizes to 50 people, Thunberg said the demonstrations would "focus on being few people in many places and keeping distance." More than 3,000 rallies were scheduled to take place glob-

spread, with many demonstrators standing or sitting at least 1.5 metres apart. Elsewhere in Germany, some 7,000 people turned out in the western city of Cologne while the cities of Freiburg and Hamburg each drew around 6,000 demonstrators.

Cadets Among 22 Dead In Ukraine Military Plane Crash

Agencies

Kiev, Ukraine: At least 22 people including military cadets were killed and two others were seriously injured on Friday when a Ukrainian air force plane crashed near Kharkiv in the east of the country, the interior ministry said. Deputy Interior Minister Anton Geraschenko confirmed the death toll to AFP, describing the incident as a "shock", and saying that the cause of the crash was being investigated. Footage of the crash released by officials on social media showed the smouldering remains of the Antonov-26 transport plane. "Most of [the dead] were students" of the Kharkiv National Air Force University, the air force said in a statement. There were 27 people on board, 20 cadets and seven crew, it added. Twenty-two have been confirmed dead, two are injured and "the search for three more people continues", the emergency services said. The injured are in a "critical" condition, regional governor Oleksiy Kucher said on Facebook. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky described the crash as a "terrible tragedy" and said he would travel to the Kharkiv region on Saturday. "We are urgently creating a commission to investigate all the cir-

cumstances and causes of the tragedy," he wrote on Facebook. The plane crashed at around 8:50 pm local time (17:50 GMT), two kilometres (1.2 miles) from the Chuhuiv military air base, the emergency services said. In photos released by the emergency services, firefighters in helmets and reflective clothing sprayed aircraft debris with jets of water.

Training flight

The body of the plane burst into flames on landing and firefighters were able to extinguish the blaze after an hour. The town of Chuhuiv is around 30 kilometres southeast of Kharkiv and 100 kilometres west of the front line where government forces are fighting pro-Russian separatists. The presidency said that according to preliminary information the transport plane crashed during a training flight. The EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell sent his condolences on behalf of the bloc. "My thoughts are with the families and friends of those who lost their lives," he tweeted. Several military planes have crashed in Ukraine during training flights in recent years. A pilot was killed in December 2018 after his Su-27 fighter crashed during landing in the Zhytomyr region.



A woman pulls a baby on a pallet as they prepare to move to a new temporary camp for migrants and refugees, on the island of Lesbos, Greece. Thousands of asylum-seekers have moved into a new temporary facility, after a fire destroyed the Moria camp and left over 12,000 people without shelter, proper sanitation or access to food and water. REUTERS

Thomas Friedman: US potentially heading to 'second Civil War'

Agencies

Washington: American political commentator and journalist Thomas Friedman has said that the United States could be headed towards a second civil war after President Donald Trump's refusal to commit to a peaceful transfer of power and relinquish his office should he lose in the November presidential election. "You know, I began my career as a journalist covering Lebanon's second civil war in its history, and I'm terrified to find myself ending my career as a journalist covering America's potential second civil war in its history," Friedman told Anderson Cooper in an interview with CNN on Thursday. "You really believe that?" Cooper asked. "I think what happened in the last few days is a six-alarm fire," said Friedman, later adding, "The President of the United States has told us 'Either I win the election or I delegitimize the election.' Those are your choices, folks." The New York Times columnist also criticized Republicans for not standing up to Trump. "This is a party that went into



its convention with no platform, just basically said whatever Trump wants, we want," Friedman said. "If you're not frightened now, if you are not terrified for what could happen, it's not 'We might have a disputed election.' It is 'We are going to have a disputed election, almost certainly,' unless Trump wins, in which case I shudder to think what four more years of this would be like." On Wednesday, Trump said he will not commit to a peaceful transition of power in the case he is defeated by Democratic nominee Joe Biden. Trump said would "see what happens" with mail-in ballots. The president also continued his criticism over states where ballots are mailed automatically to registered voters.

Trump has repeatedly claimed that mail-in ballots lead to mass voter fraud.

"We're going to have to see what happens, you know, but I've been complaining very strongly about the ballots. The ballots are a disaster," Trump said on Thursday. "Get rid of the ballots and you'll have a very peaceful — there won't be a transfer, frankly. There will be a continuation," he added. "The ballots are out of control. You know it, and you know who knows it better than anyone else? The Democrats know it better than anyone else." Trump's remarks have drawn reactions from his rank, with Republican senator Mitt Romney saying in a tweet on Wednesday night that the peaceful transition of power is "fundamental to democracy." "Any suggestion that a president might not respect this Constitutional guarantee is both unthinkable and unacceptable," Romney, wrote without directly addressing Trump. Democratic lawmaker Adam Schiff of California also reacted to Trump's remarks, saying, "This is how democracy dies."

US Election Winner Might Not Be Known For Months: Trump

Agencies

Washington: U.S. President Donald Trump said on Friday that Americans might not know the winner of the November presidential election for months due to disputes over mail ballots, building on his criticism of a method that could be used by half of U.S. voters this year.

Election experts have said it might take several days after the Nov. 3 election until a winner is known as officials will need time to count mail ballots that arrive after election day.

Speaking at a rally in Newport News, Virginia, Trump said he would prefer to find out quickly whether he won or lost, rather than wait for the mail



ballots to come in.

"I like watching television and have, 'The winner is', right? You might not hear it for months, because this is a mess," he said.

"It's very unlikely that you're going to hear a winner that night," he said. "I could be leading and then they'll just keep getting ballots, and ballots, and ballots and ballots. Because now they're saying the ballots can come in late."

Court rulings this month have allowed officials in the battleground states of Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and North Carolina to count ballots that arrive after Nov. 3 as long as they were sent by Election Day.

Opinion polls show that more Democrats than Republicans plan to vote by mail to avoid exposure to COVID-19 in crowded polling places. Trump's campaign has filed lawsuits in several states to restrict mail balloting.

Trump in recent days has refused to commit to a peaceful transfer of power if he loses the election to Democrat Joe Biden and has said he expects the Supreme Court will have to declare a winner.

Iranian president accuses US of 'savagery' after new sanctions

Agencies

Tehran: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani accused the United States on Saturday of "savagery" after Washington imposed new sanctions on Tehran, and said Iranians should direct their anger at the White House.

"The Americans have inflicted tens of millions of dollars of damage on Iran," Rouhani said in televised remarks, his voice shaking with anger.

"We haven't [seen] such an extent of savagery ... The address for Iranian people's curses and hatred is the White House."

Tensions between Washington and Tehran have soared since US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew in 2018 from the Iran nuclear deal struck by his predecessor and began reimposing sanctions that had been eased under the accord.

Washington imposed new

sanctions on Monday on Iran's defence ministry and others involved in its nuclear and weapons programme to support the US assertion that all UN sanctions against Tehran



are now restored.

On Thursday, Washington blacklisted several Iranian officials and entities over alleged gross violations of human rights, including imposing sanctions on a judge it said was involved in the case of an Iranian wrestler sentenced to death.

2 wounded in Paris knife attack near former Charlie Hebdo office

Agencies

Paris: French terrorism authorities are investigating a knife attack that wounded at least two people Friday near the former offices of the satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris, authorities said. A suspect has been arrested.

The area in eastern Paris remained cordoned off by police

identity of the suspect arrested in the area of the Bastille Plaza.

I saw a guy that was in his 30s or 40s with an axe in his hand who was walking behind a victim covered in blood...I cant tell you how many victims there was, I just saw one, witness Kader Alfa told The Associated Press at the scene.

AP reporters saw officers flooding into the neighborhood,



two hours after the attack. Children were being sequestered in nine schools while police worked to determine no other suspects were on the run, according to education and police officials.

It is unclear what motivated the attack or whether it was linked to Charlie Hebdo, which moved after its offices were targeted in a 2015 Islamic extremist attack that left 12 people dead.

Police cordoned off the area, including the former Charlie Hebdo offices, after a suspect package was noticed nearby, but the package was found to be harmless and no explosives were found, according to a police official.

An investigation was opened into attempted murder in relation with a terrorist enterprise, according to an official at the prosecutor's office. Authorities did not release the

near the Richard Lenoir subway station.

The two people confirmed injured worked for documentary film company Premieres Lignes, according to founder Paul Moreira. He told BFM television that the attacker fled into the subway, and the company's staff members were evacuated.

Moreira said a man in the street attacked two people who were in front of the building, didn't enter the building, and who attacked them with an axe and who left." He said the company had not received any threats.

A Paris police official said that while authorities initially thought two attackers were involved, they now believe it was only one person, who was detained. The official said police were still searching the area while they questioned the arrested suspect.

NEWS MAKERS

Barrett has strong support from conservative Republican senators

Barrett (48) is currently a judge on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, for which she was nominated by Trump in 2017. The US Senate confirmed her nomination by 55-43 votes.

The media reports said Trump could still change his mind between now and the announcement on Saturday.

According to The Hill newspaper, Barrett is the favourite choice of conservative Christians, who hope to overturn the landmark decision in Roe v. Wade, establishing a woman's right to an abortion.

She has strong support from conservative Republican senators. "He (Trump) has made his decision and it is Barrett," an unnamed official was quoted as saying. Multiple media reports said Trump has started informing his allies in Capitol Hill. The president is reported to



have met Barrett at the White House earlier this week.

Nominations to the Supreme Court carry a lot of significance as the judges are appointed for lifetime and they do not have a retirement age unlike other apex courts of the world, including the Indian Supreme Court.

Trump is going ahead with the nomination despite strong opposition from the Democrats. Former vice president

Joe Biden, the Democratic presidential nominee, has said the nomination needs to be done by the winner of the November 3 polls.

Trump has asserted that it is his constitutional duty to fill up the vacancy on the US Supreme Court. After Justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, Barrett would be Trump's third nominee in the first term of his presidency.

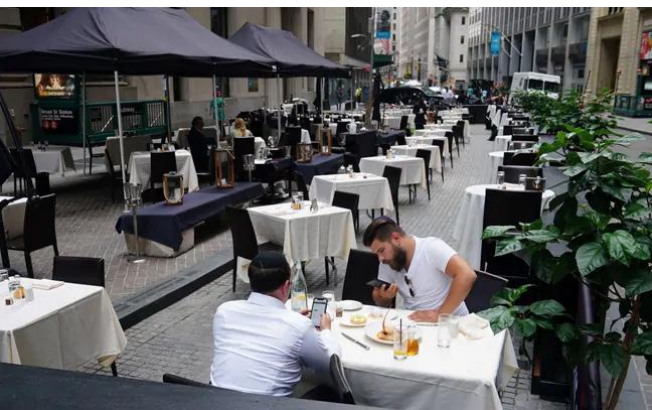
"It Worked": New York To Permanently Switch To Outdoor Dining Amid Pandemic

New York: New York is committed to making outdoor dining a permanent option for the thousands of restaurants that have embraced the concept since the coronavirus pandemic struck in the spring, Mayor Bill de Blasio said on Friday.

The city, an early U.S. COVID-19 epicenter, aims to extend to year-round Open Restaurants, a now-temporary program credited with saving 90,000 jobs, the mayor said. The program has proved enormously popular with New Yorkers since it was introduced in June.

The mayor made the announcement days before indoor restaurant dining will resume in New York City on Sept. 30, with a limit of 25% occupancy.

"Open Restaurants was a big, bold experiment in sup-



porting vital industry and reimagining our public space. And it worked," de Blasio said in a statement.

"We're proud to extend and expand this effort to keep New York City the most vibrant city in the world. It's time for a new tradition," de Blasio said.

streets during the pandemic in part to expand space for outdoor restaurant eating.

"The program allows people and small businesses rather than cars to use our curbside lanes," said James Patchett, president of New York City Economic Development Corporation, of Open Streets. "This all means more public space for New Yorkers and a healthier, more walkable city."

To keep outdoor patrons warm through the autumn and winter months, the city will allow restaurants to use electric heaters as well as propane and natural gas units, with some limitations.

Fully enclosed tents also are permitted, with an occupancy limit of 25% capacity. Plastic domes with adequate air ventilation also are approved for individual parties.