



Maximum : 20°C  
Minum : 04°C  
Humidity : 38%

SUNSET  
Today 05:39 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 06:50 AM



## News Digest

### 2 OGWS Held In Handwara: Police

Srinagar- State forces on Friday claimed to have arrested two Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militant associates in north Kashmir's Handwara. In a statement, the police said that on the basis of specific information regarding the movement of suspicious persons, Handwara Police along with 21RR and 92 Bn. CRPF established Nakas at different locations in Handwara areas and started searching of vehicles and pedestrians, reported news agency GNS.

"During checking at Chinar Park Handwara two persons riding on a bike bearing Registration number JK09B/1827 ● P-02

### BOSE Employee's Body Recovered From Jhelum

Srinagar: Police on Friday recovered body of a J&K Board of School Education (JKBOSE) employee from river Jhelum in Chattabal area of Srinagar. 48-year-old Tahir Ahmad Masoodi's body was recovered from river Jhelum at Veer Chattabal on Friday morning by a police team, officials said. A resident of Narwara Eidgah, Masoodi was employee of JK BOSE and was posted at Sub office Charar-e-Sharif. Officials told news agency KNO that the legal medico-formalities were conducted in this regard while a case has been registered.

### Pickup Van Falls Into Gorge, 2 Dead

Reasi: At least two persons were killed while two others were injured on Friday after a vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and fell into a deep gorge at Arnas area in Reasi district. According to a police statement, around 05:30 am, a vehicle (Mahindra pickup) (JK20A-7503) was on way from Arnas towards Dhanour when it rolled down and fell into a deep gorge near Dharode, resulting in on spot death of two persons and injuries to two others. The deceased persons were identified as Muhammad ● P-02

### Militant Hideout Busted In Rajouri

Srinagar: Police on Friday claimed to have busted a hideout in forest area near Gambhir Mughlan in Rajouri district and recovered arms and ammunitions. Senior Superintendent of Police Rajouri ChandanKohli said that based on a specific information, joint parties of police and army's 38 RR launched an operation in dense forest area near GambhirMughlan and busted a hideout. Two automatic AK47 rifles, as many AK magazines, 270 bullets, two Chinese ● P-02

### KU VC Inaugurates Social Service Camp

Srinagar: Vice-Chancellor of University of Kashmir Prof Talat Ahmad Friday inaugurated a special social service camp on the revered occasion of Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi (SAW). The day-long camp was organised by the Department of Students Welfare (DSW)—in line with its annual practice—in and around the University Campus to serve refreshment to the devotees visiting the Hazratbal shrine. In his remarks, Prof Talat said Milad-un-Nabi (SAW) is a ● P-02

### Grenade Attack On CRPF Camp In Budgam

BUDGAM: Suspected militants on Friday lobbed a grenade towards Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Nantehal area of Chadoora district Budgam. However, no loss of life or injury was reported in the incident, officials said.

Two bike borne persons threw the grenade on the main gate of B&D Coy of 43 battalion CRPF in the area which exploded outside the barrier, officials said Friday. A police officer told news agency GNS that no injury or loss of life was reported in the incident. "The area has been cordoned off to nab the attackers," he added.



NO Photo Abid Bhat

## Eid-e Milad Brings Joy To Valley Of Gloom

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Thousands of devotees from across the Kashmir Valley converged at the revered Hazratbal shrine here on Friday to celebrate Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi, the day when Prophet Mohammad (SAW) was born.

Reports said that several thousand people alone converged at the Hazratbal shrine

### Dr Farooq 'Barred' From Visiting Dargah, NC Aghast

The National Conference (NC) on Friday claimed that authorities in Jammu and Kashmir prevented its president Farooq Abdullah from leaving his ● P-02

in the morning and had the glimpses of the holy relics of Prophet (SAW) after Fajr prayers. The number swelled as the day progressed and thousands of devotees were ● PAGE 02

## J&K Reports 5 More Corona Deaths, Toll 1472

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Five more people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Friday, taking the number of fatalities since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union Territory to 1472.

Among the victims, officials said three belonged to Kashmir valley, while two others were residents of Jammu division.

The victims from Valley, officials said included a 55-year-old woman from Chogul Handwara, a 50-year-old man from Noorbagh here and a 60-year-old man from

### 7 Soldiers, 28 Travelers Among 566 New Cases

Jammu and Kashmir reported on Friday 566 new cases of coronavirus, including 28 travelers, two cops and seven soldiers, taking the total number of infected people in the Union Territory to 94330. ● P-02

Krankshivani Colony Sopore. Two of those who died ● PAGE 02

## President Gives More Powers To LG Ladakh

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The President of India has empowered Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh to discharge powers and functions exercised by the State Government under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

"In pursuance of clause (1) of article 239 of the Constitution, the President hereby directs that the powers and functions of the State Government under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 (35 of 2019) shall, subject to the control of the President and until further orders, be exercised by the Lieutenant Governor of the Union Territory of Ladakh within that Union Territory," reads the notification issued by Union Home Ministry.

Under section 239 of the Constitution of India, the President of India is empowered to delegate powers to administrators of UTs.

"Save as otherwise provided by Parliament by law, every Union territory shall be administered by the President acting, to such extent as he thinks fit, through an administrator to be appointed by him with such designation as he may specify," reads the provision of the Constitution.

The Consumer Protection Act, 2019 protects interests of consumers and provides for establishment of authorities for timely and effective administration and settlement of their disputes.

It states that every state government shall, by notification, establish State Consumer Protection ● PAGE 02

## KAS Officer Shifted Over Notice To IAS Officer's Family In Jammu

Agencies

JAMMU: A Kashmir Administrative Services (KAS) officer leading the Custodian Evacuee Property, Jammu, was abruptly transferred after he sent a legal notice to the family of a senior IAS officer allegedly involved in a corruption case in Jammu.

KAS officer Ravinder Sharma was transferred without any reason or assignment of any further duty after he sent a notice to Bhupinder Singh, senior IAS officer in the J&K administration.

Bhupinder Singh has been accused of claiming Rs 5,50,000 allegedly by fraud, as the first installment of the Central government scheme payable to refugees who came from Pakistan after the partition.

A notice was sent to the family of late Sardar Singh, Bhupinder Singh's father, who originally belonged to West Pakistan, but migrated to India during the Partition of 1947 as a displaced person from West Pakistan and settled in village Kodwa Khurd, Tehsil Shahzadpur/Narayngarh, district Ambala, Haryana.

A PIL was filed by Jarnail Singh and Paramjit Singh, both residents of Ramgarh, Samba, against Bhupinder Singh (IAS), son of late Sardar Singh.

The petition claims that late Sardar Singh was never the resident of Jammu and Kashmir as he was actually the resident of village Dhalli, Tehsil Bhimber, district Mirpur, which is now in Pakistan.

And despite the allotment of land by the government to late Sardar Singh and other family members in Ambala, Sardar Singh managed ● PAGE 02

**THE RESPONDENT HAS MANAGED TO GET THE FIRST** instalment of Rs 5,50,000 allegedly by fraud from the office of PRO Jammu. However, neither the respondent nor his late father were entitled to any such claim as they were actually the residents of village Kodwa Khurd in Ambala.

### Darbar Move

### Civil Secretariat Closes In Srinagar

SRINAGAR: The civil secretariat, which is the seat of Jammu and Kashmir government, closed here on Friday as part of the biannual 'Darbar move', a practice started by Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1872, officials said.

Civil Secretariat and other Darbar move offices, which observe a five-day week, closed here on Friday, while the offices observing a six-day week will close on Saturday, they said.

All the offices will reopen at Jammu on November 9. The civil secretariat and other Darbar move offices function in Srinagar for six months of summer and in Jammu for the remaining six months of the year.

The practice was started by the maharaja 145 years ago to escape the extreme heat of Jammu during summers and biting cold of winters in Srinagar.

However, the practice was continued by elected governments post-Independence in order to provide access to people of both regions -- by turns -- to the seat of power in the state.

The government spends crores of rupees every year to shift voluminous records between the two capital cities twice a year, besides paying similar amounts as allowance for the several thousand employees who shift base with the government.

There have been demands from various quarters to abolish the practice and set up ● P-02

## Police: Lashkar Hand In BJP Workers Killing

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) was behind the killing of three BJP leaders in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, Inspector General of Police Vijay Kumar said on Friday and appealed to the protected persons in the valley not to move around without their security.

Three BJP workers -- Fida Hussain, Umer Hajam and Umer Rashid Beigh -- were shot dead by militants in the Y K Pora area of Kulgam district in south Kashmir late on Thursday evening.

The Resistance Front (TRF), which is believed to be a shadow group of LeT, claimed

responsibility for the killings.

IGP (Kashmir) Kumar said police have seized a vehicle used in the attack and that such killings were being executed at the behest of Pakistan.

"Three militants came in a local car belonging to a local militant identified as Altaf Fida (Hussain) was with his two colleagues in a car and the militants fired indiscriminately on them from close range. They received grave injuries and succumbed on the way to the hospital," the IGP told reporters.

Kumar said after the attack, the militants fled in the same car towards Achbal area, from where the car was seized this morning.

A team of forensic science laboratory (FSL) ● PAGE 02

### BJP Puts Onus Of Killings On Police

The BJP leaders on Friday alleged that Deputy Commissioner and SSP of Kulgam district were responsible for the killing of three BJP men including Yuva Morcha General Secretary. "We contacted DC and SSP many a times ● P-02

### Lone Sons Of Their Parents

The killing of three BJP workers in Qazigund on Thursday has taken the number of total BJP workers/leaders killed by militants in three months to nine. On Thursday evening, three BJP workers Fida Hussain (BJP's Yuva Morcha ● P-02

### FIGHT FOR SPECIAL STATUS

## Kargil Parties Announce Support To People's Alliance

Agencies

KARGIL: In a significant development, the newly formed People's Alliance for Gupkar declaration (PAGD) on Friday joined hands with the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) to fight for the restoration of Article 370 and reunification of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the media men outside the Circuit House Kargil, former Chief Minister and NC leader Omar Abdullah said that



PIC COURTESY SOCIAL MEDIA

the PAGD and KDA will continue to fight for the restoration of ar-

ticle 370 and 35-A politically and legally in every peaceful manner.

He said that both PAGD and KDA have the same agenda, "We don't accept the decision of last year's August 05 neither the bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir and creation of two separate UTs."

Responding to a question about the participation of Kargil leadership in PAGD meeting, Omar said that they expect the participation of Kargil leadership in the meetings of People's Alliance of Gupkar Declaration (PAGD).

To a question about ● PAGE 02

### ...Peoples' Alliance Ups Ante Over Special Status

## We Will Not Step Back In Our Fight, Says Omar In Kargil

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Asserting that the fight for special status will be taken to its conclusion, former Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) Vice-President Omar Abdullah on Friday urged the people to put up a united face to defeat the designs of putting the land of Jammu and Kashmir on sale.

Omar made these remarks during an interaction with the people in Drass on Friday. The former CM is leading a delegation of Peoples' Alliance to Kargil to gar-

### Police Foils NC Rally In Jammu

The National Conference on Friday took out a rally against the new land laws in Jammu and Kashmir and said it will oppose all anti-people and anti-youth policies, and work towards ensuring that the rights and privileges of the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh are safeguarded under the Constitution of India. ● P-02

ner support from the leadership for the fight for special status.

"Warmly received by the people of Drass, who in one voice endorsed the agenda of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration," Omar tweeted.

"People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration is heading to Kargil to hold consultations with the people to chart out the road ahead," he said on Twitter.

Commenting on the Ladakh visit of the PAGD ● PAGE 02

### Sharma Sworn In As Election Commissioner

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Friday administered the oath to Kewal Kumar Sharma as State Election Commissioner.

Sharma, an advisor to LG, resigned from his post earlier today and was appointed the State Election Commissioner, an official said.

Speaking on the occasion, the LG congratulated Sharma for his new appointment.

Sharma, a 1983-batch IAS officer of the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa and Mizoram Union Territories (AGMUT) cadre, was appointed advisor to the Lieutenant Governor in November last year.

During his service career spanning around 30 years, ● P-02



MEMBERS OF BATAMALOOO TRADERS ASSOCIATION shout slogans during a protest against the publications of a cartoon of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) in France and French President Emmanuel Macron's comments, in Srinagar.. KO Photo Abid Bhat



# Grand Finale: Real Kashmir Lifts Spectrum Football Tournament

**Observer News Service**

**PAMPORE:** A spectacular display of football ended the month long Spectrum Football Tournament 2020 on Friday in Saffron town of Pampore.

Organized by Etihad Football Academy in Association with District Football Association Pulwama (Zone Pampore) the tournament was sponsored by Spectrum Advertising Services.

The Cheering crowd watched Real Kashmir clean sweep.

After keeping spectators hooked for over a month, the tournament finally concluded at Iqbal Ground in Pampore.

The final game saw Real Kashmir beat Lexicon FC Ganderbal.

There were 32 teams from across Kashmir participating in the tournament.

The event literally added energy to the sports lovers of Pampore town as all matches had huge audiences.

- \* Man of the Match Mr Danish
- \* Man of the Tournament Mr Amir
- \* The Chief Guest for the final award ceremony was Mr Abdul Rashid Bhat (Chairman) Spectrum Advertising Services, Managing Director Gowher Jan Bhat and Director Sarfaraz Rashid Bhat and guests of honors were Ishtiyag Mohiddin, Tehsildar Pampore besides Majid Kakroo, Internationally recognized footballer and other dignitaries.

The event has helped local talented sports lovers get connected with senior players from across Kashmir valley.

Other partners were WALLMAX Interiors, Rootz Salon, Zaffron Foods, Bizwiz Creations & Karachi Fashions.



## Eid-e Milad Brings Joy To...

seen at the shrine and its adjacent sprawling lawns along the banks of Dal Lake especially during Friday, Asr and Magrib prayers.

Most people were seen folding their hands while some had tears trickling down their faces as they prayed. People also offered 'Durud' and recited the Holy Qur'an.

Besides Hazratbal, congregational prayers were also held at Asarisharif Kalashpora, Jenab Sahib Soura, Lal Bazaar, Punjura Shopian, Khiram Sirhama Anantnag, Seer Hamadan, Kaba Marg, Qaimoh, Ahamshrief Bandipora and Hazrat Janbaz Wali (RA) Baramulla.

A festive look prevailed for the past several days as various mosques and shrines in this summer capital of the state and other major towns were decked with lights and bunting.

Authorities and some social organizations had also erected tents for medical aid as well as refreshment for devotees at several places along the streets for the devotees. Last year, authorities barred congregation prayers in the aftermath of the August 5 decisions.

This year, the congregation prayers were held amid Covid-19 threat and as per reports protocols to contain the spread of the virus were seen to be observed in breach. At places massive traffic jams were witnessed at several places particularly in Lal Bazar areas, the reports added.

## Dr Farooq 'Barred' From...

residence to offer prayers at the Hazratbal shrine here on the occasion of Milad-un-Nabi. No official from the administration was available for comments on the issue.

"J&K administration has blocked the residence of Party President Dr Farooq Abdullah and stopped him from offering prayers at Dargah Hazratbal, JKNC condemns this infringement of fundamental right to pray, especially on the auspicious occasion of Milad Un Nabi SAW," the NC said on its Twitter handle.

Farooq Abdullah, who represents Srinagar in the Lok Sabha, was supposed to visit the Hazratbal shrine, on the banks of the Dal Lake, to pray there on the occasion.

Milad-un-Nabi marks the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and it is observed in the month of Rabi' al-awwal, the third month in the Islamic calendar.

Former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti condemned the action and said it exposed "deep paranoia" within the government.

In a tweet, she said, "Preventing Farooq sahab from offering prayers on Milad Un Nabi SAW at Hazratbal exposes GOI's deep paranoia and their iron fist approach towards JK. It's a gross violation of our rights and is highly condemnable."

The recently cobbled People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) comprising regional and some national mainstream political parties including the NC and PDP termed the action a "new low in curtailment of fundamental rights" of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement, PAGD spokesperson Sajad Lone condemned the state administration for putting a blockade outside the residence of Abdullah and demanded that it be removed.

Abdullah is also the president of the PAGD.

Lone said, "Abdullah was slated to go to Hazratbal in order to participate in the religious congregation on account of Eid-Milad-Un-Nabi, however (he) was barred from leaving his house."

"We strongly condemn the actions of the state administration which are tantamount to interference in the religious rights of Dr Farooq Abdullah. This marks a new low in the curtailment of fundamental rights of the people of J-K. We demand that the blockade be removed so that Dr Farooq Sahib is able to perform his religious duties," he said.

## Civil Secretariat Closes In...

permanent civil secretariats in Jammu and Srinagar cities so that people can get redressal to their problems round the year while saving a substantial amount of the public exchequer.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the Darbar move from Jammu to Srinagar this summer.

The government allowed Jammu-based employees to stay back in the winter capital while valley-based employees were directed to report to work in May this year.

However, all employees were directed to report to work in July, two months after the scheduled opening of darbar in Srinagar.

## Police: Lashkar Hand In BJP...

has gone to Achbal to inspect the car, he added.

The IGP said LeT was behind the killings.

"The names of LeT militants -- a local militant from Dooru, Nisar Khan-day; and Abbas from Khudwani who was previously associated with HM (Hizbul Mujahideen) and is now with LeT and also claims to be from TRF -- are cropping up. The involvement of these two is there, but there may be a FT (foreign militant) involved as well (in the attack), he said.

The IGP asserted the security forces will neutralise them soon.

Kumar said Hussain was one of the 1,619 vulnerable persons who were lodged in secure locations before the Centre's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5 last year.

"We had made a list of 1,619 vulnerable persons before August 5 (last year) and we had kept them in different hotels in secure areas. We had kept Fida (Hussain) in a hotel in Pahalgam where he stayed for three weeks. Recently, he gave an undertaking and left the hotel. We are investigating what they were doing in a car in an area far away from home," he said.

Asked whether the attack was pre-planned, the IGP said it was possible.

"It seems so to us as well because what were they doing away from home, waiting for someone or not, then militants came, attacked them and then ran away to Achbal. There is a chance that it was a pre-planned attack and we are investigating it and will soon solve it," he said.

On a question as to whether the attacks on BJP activists -- instances of which have increased over the last few months -- were carried out at the local level by the militants or did the ultras get orders from Pakistan, the IGP said this was part of Pakistan-sponsored militancy.

"You know it all. Recently, mediapersons also received threats through

"Kashmir Fight", an online medium which is run in Pakistan, or the TRF website. They claimed the attack yesterday on 'Kashmir Fight' as well. This is Pakistan-sponsored 'militancy' and this proves that these killings take place on the orders from Pakistan, he said.

As a countermeasure to such attacks, Kumar appealed to the protected persons to follow the standard operating procedures (SOP) laid down by the security agencies for their movement and not to move around in vulnerable areas especially without their security.

"We have provided PSOs and security to 157 BJP workers, and nearly 30 have been provided with guards and we will provide more security to those who have severe threat perception. We sensitise them, tell them the do's and don'ts. The PSOs of the protected persons tell them not to venture out in the night and not to move in vulnerable areas. I also appeal to the protected persons not to go to difficult areas in the night without the gunmen and follow the SOP, he said.

In the wake of the attack, the IGP said, the security forces have launched combing operations in seven to eight places in south Kashmir.

"We are very much hopeful to neutralise this group soon, he added.

## BJP Puts Onus Of Killings...

and told him that our leaders are facing threats, but they never took it as serious," BJP's J&K spokesman Altaf Thakur, as per news agency KNO told media men in Kulgam on Friday.

"It is totally a security failure which led to the killing of three innocent people for which two officers are responsible," he added.

Besides Thakur, several BJP leaders including J&K Chief Ravinder Raina visited the residences of the slain trio in Kulgam district to express solidarity with the bereaved families.

Talking to reporters, Raina said that the sacrifices of BJP workers won't go in vain and the "sponsored militancy in Kashmir will have to pay the price".

"World powers must join hands to conduct NATO airstrikes on militant camps in Pakistan like strikes were conducted on Al-Qaeda and Taliban," he said, adding that the trio were "innocent and were killed for their love for the country".

Pertinently, three BJP workers including Yuva Morcha President Fida Hussain Itoo, Umar Rashid both residents of Y K Pora, Qazigund and Umar Ramzan of Sopat, Qazigund were killed on Thursday evening in a militant attack.

Meanwhile, hundreds of people participated in funerals of slain trio which were held at different places in the district

## Lone Sons Of Their Parents...

General Secretary) and BJP worker Umar Ramzan, both residents of Y K Pora, Qazigund and another party worker Umar Rashid, a resident of Sopat in Devsar area of Kulgam were shot dead by militants, according to the police.

As per locals, the slain trio were lone sons of their families. They said Fida has left behind five sisters, parents, wife and a one year old daughter while as Umar from Y K Pora, was a driver by profession and has left behind a sister and parents.

They further said that Umar Rashid from Sopat, Devsar has left behind a sister and parents. Before the slain trio, six more workers of the BJP party were killed while one was injured in less than four months in Valley.

On September 23, Block Development Council (BDC) chairman Khag affiliated with BJP Party namely Bupinder Singh of Budgam was killed by militants at his ancestral village Dalwach, Budgam.

On August 09, BJP's OBC District President Abdul Hamid Najar was killed when he was on morning walk in Ompora, Budgam. On August 06, BJP Sarpanch namely Sajad Ahmad Khanday was shot dead by militants near his residence at Vessu, Qazigund.

On 04 August, a BJP Sarpanch was shot at and injured during militant attack in Akhtran area of Kulgam, however, he survived.

On July 08, three members of a family including BJP State executive Committee member Sheikh Waseem Bari, his father Bashir Ahmad and brother Sheikh Umar who were also office bearers were killed by militants at their residence in Bandipora. Agencies

## J&K Reports 5 More Corona...

in Jammu include a 66-year-old man from R S Pora and a resident from Doda. With these deaths, the fatality count has reached 978 in Valley and 494 in Jammu region.

Srinagar district with 352 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (253), Baramulla (145), Budgam (94), Pulwama (80), Kupwara (73), Anantnag (74), Rajouri (47), Kulgam (46), Bandipora(46), Doda (46), Shopian (35), Ganderbal (32), Udhampur (32), Kathua (31), Samba (25), Poonch (23), Kishtwar(14), Ramban (13), and Reasi (8). (With GNS inputs)

## 7 Soldiers, 28 Travelers...

Among the cases, officials said Srinagar reported 141 cases, Budgam 26, Baramulla 66, Pulwama 20, Kupwara 25, Anantnag 12, Bandipora 14, Ganderbal 28, Kulgam 3, Shopian 12, Jammu 109, Rajouri 5, Udhampur 30,Doda 14, Kathua 14, Poonch 8, Samba 6, Kishtwar 19, Ramban 7 and Reasi 7. Moreover, officials said 654 more Covid-19 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals 277 from Jammu Division and 377 from Kashmir Division.

## Kargil Parties Announce...

the intentions to meet the Ladakh's Apex Body for the 6th schedule. Omar said that the People's Alliance for the Gupkar Declaration (PAG) is ready to hold talks with anyone who is willing to talk.

He said their fight is against BJP and it (BJP) doesn't represent the nation (India).

"Our demand is totally within the parameters of the Indian constitution which existed already and for that PAGD and KDA won't step back", he said.

Omar said that people in Jammu have strongly opposed last year's August 05 decision like the people in Kargil.

Asgar Ali Karbalai on behalf of the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) said that deliberations were held regarding pre and post-August 05 situation with the PAGD delegation and both have a common agenda of restoration of the erstwhile state of J&K along with Article 370 and 35-A.

"Both PAGD and KDA are committed to the restoration of Article 370

and 35-A," he said.

Meanwhile, sources said that KDA got support from influential Islamic School Kargil, Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust, Sahib-e-Zaman Turst Kargil, Jamiat-e-Ahli Sunnat, Ahle Sufian Naqshbandi and Students Movement Kargil.

## Sharma Sworn In As Election ...

Sharma has held various positions, including the Chief Secretary of Delhi and Goa. He also served as Secretary in the Ministry of Human Resource Development before his retirement.

Sharma has also served as advisor to the administrator of Chandigarh.

## We Will Not Step Back In Our...

delegation, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said it was high time someone reached out to the people of Kargil as they "too have grave apprehensions" about the future.

The delegation, led by Omar Abdullah, is now in Kargil to begin consultations with the people "on the road ahead" for Jammu and Kashmir. Seven mainstream parties of Jammu and Kashmir, including the NC and the PDP, have formed the PAGD for restoration of the special status of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. NC's Farooq Abdullah is the PAGD's chairman and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti is vice-chairperson "Glad to see all of you at Kargil to engage with the people. High time someone reached out to them since they too have grave apprehensions about the future," Mehbooba, also a former chief minister tweeted.

The members of the delegation, which is visiting Ladakh, comprise of NC leader Nasir Aslam Wani, PDP leaders Ghulam Nabi Lone Hanjura and Waheed Para, and Awami National Conference leader Muzaffar Shah.

This is the first visit of leaders of mainstream political parties of Jammu and Kashmir to Ladakh after last year's decision of the Centre.

On August 5 last year, the Centre had abrogated the special status of the erstwhile state and split it into union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

While addressing the people at Drass, Omar said that he felt as if he was visiting a place unknown to him. He said he felt like a guest in Kargil as all names earlier linked to J&K have been removed.

"A part of Jammu and Kashmir, Drass was abruptly taken away from us. The draconian diktats can't widen the gap between people of Kashmir and Ladakh. Drass is a part of Kashmir and it will remain so," he told gathering.

He said there was a need to aware people about the consequences of the August 5 move by the government of India.

"New Delhi is implementing new laws against the wishes of the people and we must show a united face to defeat the designs of those that want to put the land of Jammu and Kashmir on sale," he said.

While concluding his address in Drass, Omar sought support of people for Peoples' Alliance saying that the leadership will not run but take this fight to a logical conclusion.

Referring to the Modi-government's August 5 move, Omar said that the forcibly implemented decision has not been accepted and that the leadership will fight for the restoration of all that has been "snatched from us".

"No Assembly or Chief Minister of the state has signed it. The powers were taken away by the Governor of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir illegally and without talking to us and the state was divided by downgrading it into two separate Union Territories," he said.

While talking about his political opponents, the NC leader said "We never missed a chance to confront each other on political fronts, but that era was different, given the circumstances we are going through and now we are one.

"Today it is our responsibility to forget all those differences, and it is not the fight for Chief Ministerial Post, Election or power. Today we are on common platform, be it National Conference, Peoples Democratic Party, Awami National Conference, Peoples Conference or CPIM, we all have come together keeping our differences and political ideologies aside, we are here to fight against the August 5, 2019 decision when black laws were forcibly implemented on us and you were separated from us and we are working on rejoining you back with us," he added.

According to reports, Omar led delegation also called upon members of Kargil Democratic Alliance.

Speaking to the media in Kargil, Omar said "Our fight is not against the country but against BJP and its ideology. BJP is not the country and vice versa. What we want back was written in the Constitution. We will not step back in our fight," he said.

(With PTI, KNT inputs)

## Police Foils NC Rally In Jammu...

Led by the party's Jammu Provincial President Devender Singh Rana and attended by a number of leaders, including Ajay Kumar Sadhotra, Surjeet Singh Salathia, Rattan Lal Gupta, Mushtaq Ahmed Bukhari, Javed Rana, the march towards the Raj Bhavan was stopped by police.

"Time and again, people were assured by Jammu and Kashmir BJP leaders that their rights to land and jobs would be protected at all costs, even after the abrogation of Article 370 provisions. Where have those assurances gone?" Rana posed

In a gazette notification on Tuesday, the Centre omitted the phrase "permanent resident of the state" from Section 17 of the Jammu and Kashmir Development Act that deals with disposal of the land in the union territory, paving the way for people from outside Jammu and Kashmir to buy land in JK and Ladakh, over a year after the nullification of provisions under Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution.

"The anti-people and anti-youth policies of the present administration is a betrayal of the people of Jammu in particular. We are an integral part of India but even the basic protection granted to states such as Himachal Pradesh and others have been denied to the people of Jammu and Kashmir," Rana said.

Describing NC chief Farooq Abdullah as a "democrat committed to secularism and nationalism", the party's Jammu provincial president said in view of his immense contribution towards nation-building and sustaining peace, amity, harmony, democracy, progress and development of Jammu and Kashmir, it is "very unfortunate that he was not allowed to move out of his Gupkar residence to offer prayers on the auspicious occasion of Eid Milad Un Nabi.

Asked to comment on the recent killing of BJP leaders in Kashmir, Rana

described it as an act of cowardice. "We unequivocally condemn the incident and express our heartfelt condolences and sympathies with the bereaved families of the leaders."

"Terrorism has no place in a civilized society. A terrorist has no religion, a terrorist is a terrorist and must be treated as a terrorist and we all have to fight together to uproot the menace of terrorism," the NC leader said.

He said, "We are an integral part of India, we are Indians and our battle is not against our country but against the divisive ideology and our aim is to safeguard the rights of the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh as enshrined in the constitution."

A strong Jammu and Kashmir will lead to a stronger India and that can only happen when the hearts and minds of the people of the Union Territory are won with compassion and their dignity and honour is respected, Rana said.

Addressing the protestors at the rally, senior National Conference leader Ajay Sadhotra said the party will fight for the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir within the framework of the Constitution.

## President Gives More Powers...

Council headed by the minister-in-charge of Consumer Affairs. The law also provides for the establishment of district consumer protection council in every district.

## KAS Officer Shifted Over...

to get a land allotted in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, whereas his other family members are still residing in Ambala.

As per the documents accessed by IANS, copies of the allotment of land in village Kodwa Khurd in the name of Sardar Singh were shown to the high court. The copies clearly showed the names of Sardar Singh, his mother and brothers as settled in the same district of Ambala. A copy of the report issued by the office of the provincial rehabilitation officer (PRO) reveals that late Sardar Singh got land allotted in village Chack Chatakan Ramgarh, Samba.

A copy of a 1971 voter list, issued by the Ambala Tehsildar, revealed that late Sardar Singh used to cast vote in Ambala. The list clearly reveals the name and residence of Sardar Singh.

The PIL claims that neither the father, nor the respondent (Bhupinder Singh) ever disclosed the allotment of land in village Kodwa Khurd. The respondent, Bhupinder Singh, continues to receive refugee benefits from time to time on the basis of false allotment of land which was managed by the father of the respondent allegedly by fraud.

The respondent has managed to get the first instalment of Rs 5,50,000 allegedly by fraud from the office of PRO Jammu. However, neither the respondent nor his late father were entitled to any such claim as they were actually the residents of village Kodwa Khurd in Amballa.

The documents accessed by IANS also revealed that the record of the land allotted to the respondent's father is still available with the Tehsil office of village Kodwa Khurd in Ambala.

The PIL claims that the respondent prepared a fake permanent residence certificate (PRC) of the state (now UT). The other three brothers of the respondent are still the residents of village Kodwa Khurd and the only one showing himself to be the resident of village Chack Chatakan, is the respondent, Bhupinder Singh.

The PIL seeks proper legal action against the respondent and cancellation of the monetary benefits obtained by him.

## 2 OGWS Held In Handwara:...

found in suspicious condition, who on seeing the search party tried to escape from the spot but were chased and apprehended by the search party," the statement added.

"The apprehended persons on preliminary questioning disclosed their identity as: Liyakat Ahmad Mir son of AbAhad Mir and Aqib Rashid Mir son of Ab Rashid Mir both residents of HyenTrehgam Kupwara."

"On their personnel search Arms and Ammunition were recovered from their possession."

The statement further said that during questioning it came to surface that the duo are working with LeT militant outfit as associates and were about to distribute the Arms and Ammunition amongst militants in South Kashmir.

"In this regard Case FIR No. 363/2020 U/s 7/25 I.A.Act,13,18,20 and 38 UA(P) Act has been registered in Police Station Handwara. Further investigation into the matter is under process," reads the statement.

## Pickup Van Falls Into Gorge,...

Abbas, 27, son of Noor Hussain of DhanourArnas and Abdul Latief 40, son of Muhammad Kashim of DhanourArnas.

Officials identified the injured as Muhammad Shabir, 22, son of Muhammad Farid of DhanourArnas and Muhammad Saleem, 25, son of Jalal din of DhanourArnasamd said they were immediately shifted to DH Reasi for treatment from where Saleem was referred to GMC Jammu for advanced treatment.

"The bodies were shifted to PHC Arnas for post mortem. A case in this regard has also been registered at PS Arnas," officials said.

## Militant Hideout Busted...

pistol, as many magazines, 75 Pika rounds, 12 Blank rounds, 10 Detonators and 5-6 Kilograms of Explosive material were recovered from the hideout, he said.

The searches in the area are going on and police have also taken up investigation of the case after registration of FIR in Manjakote police station under relevant sections of law, he added. (GNS)

## KU VC Inaugurates Social...

sacred occasion which teaches us to be compassionate, helpful and kind-hearted in accordance with the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The revered occasion should reinforce the message of peace, harmony and brotherhood for the prosperity of people all around, he said.

The V-C also distributed food packets amongst the devotees. (KNO)



# Protests in Srinagar, Kargil over French President’s anti-Islam remarks

Srinagar: Protests were held in Srinagar, Kargil and other major towns across Kashmir on Friday against the French President Emmanuel Macron’s recent remarks against Islam and his support for blasphemous caricatures of holy prophet.

Several traders and residents in Batamaloo here protested against Macron and condemned the blasphemy.

The protest was organized by All Traders and Transporters Joint Action Committee Batamaloo.

Holding placards that read, “Kill us but don’t disrespect our prophet”, the protesters said that they will continue this protest until he (Macron) apologizes to the Muslims.

Protest was also held in Kargil district of Ladakh against French president.

Eyewitnesses said that soon after offering Friday prayers, hundreds of people held a protest demonstration against the French President.

Protestors while carrying placards, raised slogans and marched through the streets of Kargil, they added.



Protests were held in Srinagar on Friday against the French President Emmanuel Macron’s anti-Islam remarks. KO Photo

## LG Reviews Winter Preparedness Sets deadlines for replacement of power transformers

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 30: Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today reviewed the winter preparedness and logistic arrangements of various departments in a meeting here at Raj Bhavan.

The Lt Governor directed the concerned officers to adopt a proactive approach to address the needs and requirements of the people; especially those living in far-flung and snow bound areas.

He asked them to be responsive and take comprehensive measures to minimize the difficulties of common people, work at grass roots level and reach out to the people to address their genuine concerns.

He also directed the officers to put committed efforts to ensure uninterrupted drinking water and power supply & timely restoration, availability of public utilities like firewood, ration, medicines and other basic amenities and essential supplies.

Necessary directions were passed to maintain sufficient stock of firewood, fuel, food grains, and medicines, especially in remote and difficult terrain areas.

The Lt Governor directed the Power Development Department to maintain the availability of buffer stock in District Head Quarters, besides ensuring proper functioning of existing transmission lines, transformers, electrical equipment, repair workshops, timely repairs and replacement of the damaged infrastructure and equipment.

After taking assessment from each DC, the Lt Governor set a deadline of 24 hours for urban areas and 48 hours for rural areas for replacement of the transformers barring difficult and inaccessible areas.

The Lt Governor stressed upon close monitoring of the functioning of the power distribution & transmission channels in order to ensure uninterrupted power supply during the harsh winter days.

## Media in-charge BJP Pahalgam resigns

Anantnag: Hours after the killing of three BJP workers including its Yuva Morcha General Secretary Kulgam in Qazigund area south Kashmir, BJP worker from Pahalgam has resigned from the basic membership of the party.

Mohammed Ashraf Wani, who was holding the charge of Media in-charge of BJP Pahalgam Constituency and Minority Morcha, tendered his resignation from the basic membership of the party following the killing of three BJP workers on Thursday evening. Ashraf who is also the Vice President of Municipal Committee Aishmuqam, said that from now onwards he is not associated with BJP.

"I am offering my resignation from all the positions and posts of BJP party structure and henceforth I have no association with BJP overtly or covertly. I request all my friends, neighbours and associates that this statement is for the information of all and office bearers of BJP as well with the request that it must be taken as the final decision to quit from BJP from today 28 October 2020," he said in his message.

## Athrout' NGO donates oxygen concentrators

Srinagar: Noted Srinagar based Non Governmental Organization (NGO) ‘Athrout’, on Friday distributed 50 oxygen concentrators among NGOs, based in Drass to Kulgam and An-

initially the organization procured one machine and gave to the needy patients on nominal rent and together with investment from the organization and the rent collected



antnag to Kupwara.

A total number of 11 districts of Jammu and Kashmir were covered under the gesture, where these oxygen concentrators are said to be shot in number as against the ratio needed.

The function was presided over by the Chairman of Athrout Bashir Ahmed, which was attended by dozens of NGO representatives of 22 NOGs, which benefited from the donation.

Bashir Ahmed, while giving a brief about the objectives behind the goodwill gesture said that

more and more oxygen concentrators to contribute towards the fight against Covid-19.

“Today we have more than 300 oxygen concentrators, which are helping a great way in the fight against Covid-19,” adding that we have been successful in saving hundreds of lives of Covid victims and COPD patients with our intervention.

He said, “Thus we have been able to live up to saying of Islam, which is, if one life is saved, the whole humanity is saved,” he added.

## DM Jammu issues fresh order on night restriction

JAMMU OCTOBER 30: District Magistrate, Jammu, vide powers conferred upon under section 144 of CrPC read with relevant provisions under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and the Disaster Management Act, 2005, restrict the movement of individuals for all non-essential activities between 10 pm to 5 pm

in the territorial limits of District Jammu w.e.f 30th October, 2020 upto 30th November, 2020.

Any violation of this order shall invite punitive action under section 188 of Indian Penal Code and other relevant sections of Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION GANDERBAL

Fresh NIT No.-120/2020-21 for Stage No. 2 issued endorsement No.9421-30 Dated:29-10-2020

- For and on behalf of Lt. Governor Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir sealed tenders affixed with Rs.5.00 (Revenue stamps) are invited from the Registered P.W.D Contractor's of any class for the snow clearance of various roads falling under the jurisdiction R&B Division Ganderbal on Annual Stage basis for the winter of 2020-21 as per the stage list herewith.
- Tenders written on tender booklet forms issued by any Executive Engineer of any wing of the Public Works Department of Kashmir province will be received in the office of Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Ganderbal/Bandipora on or before 07-11-2020 upto 2.00 P.M and will be opened by him on the same day or any other subsequent day convenient to the Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Ganderbal/Bandipora.
- The Superintending Engineer reserves to himself right of accepting or rejecting any tender without assigning any reason or giving any explanation.
- The tender bearing conditions or mutilations or submitted telegraphically or on plain paper will not be entertained.
- The intending tenderers are required to quote rate as percentage above or below the Sanctioned Schedule of rates of 2012 (i.e. %age above or below the S.S.R of 2012). The rates should be quoted both in words as well as in figures and written in ink without any mutilation.
- No subsequent correction slip or verbal representation for raising or lowering the rates of tenders shall be entertained.
- Under any circumstances no extra rates can be allowed or any claim entertained. No such mutilation should be made while quoting for the work. In case of any ambiguity the decision of the tender opening authority shall be final.
- The tenders will remain valid for a period of three months from the date of opening of tenders.
- One stage will ordinarily be allotted to one contractor but he may however tender for any number of stages but on separate tender forms.
- All tenders must properly be sealed in envelop bearing the name of the Division, Stage No. and the name of tender otherwise these are liable for rejection.
- The successful tenderer shall have to enter into an agreement with the department after the result of tender is announced/intimated to the contractor.
- As soon as the acceptance of the tender is communicated to the successful tenderer, the contract shall be binding upon him through the formal deed incorporating the terms of contract may be executed by the contractor later. Failure for execution of such a formal deed shall not however prevent the department to enforce the contract against the contractor.
- The snow clearance stage contractor shall be bound to do the snow clearance immediately when he is ordered to do so. For this purpose the stage contractor or his representative (approved by the Executive Engineer) has to keep himself in close liaison with the departmental officers and has to be present in the stage jurisdiction. In case contractor fails to make the clearance within the scheduled period and or fails to provide immediate motor paths a penalty of Rs.500/- (Rupees five hundred) per day of delay will be imposed at the discretion of the Executive Engineer.
- All motorable roads shall have to be cleared on the same day of snow fall as there has to be no blockade of road for more than 12 hours.
- The following time limit has been fixed for execution of the snow clearance for 12' road width:
  - Average snow fall above 4" but not exceeding 9" depth one day of snow.
  - Average snow fall above 9" but not exceeding 15" depth two day of snow.
  - Average snow fall above 15" depth of snow three days.
- The contractor shall make reasonable and timely payment to a labour engaged by him. The Executive Engineer on any complaint received by him in this behalf, if satisfied after making enquiry, that such payment has been with held or delayed, may make such payments direct to labour and deduct amount from the dues of the contractor.
- Normally the contractor will engage local labour but under special circumstances where in it is considered in the interest of prompt completion of work labour from outside may be imported without approval of the department.
- The stage contractor is bound to provide proper clothing, shoes, ghouse and other such things to the labour which will protect them from the adverse effects of extreme cold. In case any labourer suffer on this account and attracts disease as a consequences of poor care of the contractor, the stage contractor shall be bound to pay compensation to the labourer and bear the treatment charges. In case any labourer dies while working on the snow clearance job and where it is established that the death has occurred due to the poor care of the contractor, the stage contractor shall have to pay an amount of Rs.3,00,000/- to the legal heirs of the deceases labourer.
- The contractor will abide and respect all the rules/ regulations and laws of all the Govt. department and for any violation shall be liable to be punished under the law of the respective department.
- Subletting of the work wholly or partly is strictly prohibited and will be treated as breach of contract.
- For any dispute between the contractor the department (Chief Engineer, PWD) will act as Arbitrator whose decision will be final and binding upon the contractor.
- The contractor will keep sufficient stock of tools and plants such as shovels pick axes etc. always ready and available with him in the stage besides sufficient labour available at every heavy snow fall in the stage.
- No claim of any sort will be entertained after or during the clearance job. Any dispute or claim must be brought to the notice of the Executive Engineer before undertaking the work.
- In case the snow clearance machine is engaged by the department for speedily execution of the snow clearance, the stage contractor may have to supply the labour for clearance of the residual snow.
- At least five passing zones at suitable places are to be provided in one K.M for allowing passing of traffic.
- The stage contractor will start the clearance in all Kms in his stage and labour is to be Distributed in all Kms in such way.
- Bus stand including bus stop should be cleared on top priority basis.
- The earnest money as mentioned in the enclosed list has to be in the shape of C.D.R Pledged to the Superintending Engineer, PWD (R&B) Circle Ganderbal/Bandipora and Treasury Challan pledged to the Executive Engineer, (R&B) Division Ganderbal. (Earnest money in cash or by cheque with the tenderer will not be accepted)
- The tenderer are at liberty to send their tenders either by post or in person, postal tenders should be sent through Registered post subscribed the following in front cover of the Registered envelop within the due date. The tenders received late and through ordinary post shall not be entertained and shall be totally rejected.
  - Name of Division.
  - Reference to N.I.T.
  - Name/ No. of stage.
  - Name of Contractor with address.
  - Reference to NIT No.
  - Reference to C.D.R No. & date.
- Correction slip found in the tender box regarding enhancing/lowering the rates, or connected With the bid shall not be entertained.
- Deductions on account of Taxes/GST shall be made from the bills of the contractors as applicable under rules.

No.9421-30  
Dated:29-10-2020

FOR & ON BEHALF OF LT. GOVERNOR UT of J&K  
Sd/-  
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
(R&B) DIVISION GANDERBAL

DIPK-8255/20

#### List of Snow Clearance Stages for the Year 2020-21

Stage No.	Particular of Stage	Name of Sub-Division	Cost of Tender Document (Treasury Challan)	Earnest Money
2.	1)Dab Shalhar road 2)Sheikh Zoo 3)Inner links at Dab incld. Imam Bada 4)Gundi Roshan Pati dar Mohalla 5)Inner links of shalhar 6 Sumbal bridge to Shadipora approach 7) Gundi Roshan Lati to Khan Mohalla 8)Inner links Gamwara 9)Narayan Bagh to Guzhama Bridge	Lar Sub Division	200/=	Rs.2000/-

#### DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- 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  
13 Rabi-ul-Awwal  
1442

#### PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 26
ZUHR	12: 15
ASR	4:02
Magrib	5:43
ISHA	7:04

## This Day In History

- 1876 - Great Backerganj Cyclone of 1876 ravages British India (Modern-day Bangladesh), over 200,000 killed
- 1914 - Great Britain & France declare war on Turkey
- 1917 - World War I: Battle of Beersheba in southern Palestine - "last successful cavalry charge in history" performed by the 4th Australian Light Horse.
- 1922 - Benito Mussolini (Il Duce) becomes premier of Italy
- 1924 - World Savings Day was announced in Milan, Italy, by the Members of the Association at the 1st International Savings Bank Congress (World Society of Savings Banks).
- 1940 - Battle of Britain, fought between the RAF and Luftwaffe over the En
- 1942 - 9th day of the Battle of El Alamein
- 1943 - World War II: F4U Corsair accomplishes the first successful radar-guided interception.
- 1956 - Britain and France join Israeli forces in Egypt and begin to bomb Egypt to reopen Suez Canal
- 1959 - USSR & Egypt sign contracts for building Aswan Dam
- 1960 - Cyclone hits coast of Gulf of Bengal; about 10,000 die
- 1968 - US President Lyndon B. Johnson orders a halt to all bombing of North Vietnam
- 1980 - Senegal routes troops to Gambia due to Libyan threat
- 1984 - Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is assassinated by her bodyguards, Satwant Singh and Beant Singh at her home in New Delhi
- 1985 - Last day in Test cricket for Zaheer Abbas
- 1989 - Turgut Ozal elected president of Turkey
- 1989 - US performs nuclear test at Nevada Test Site
- 1990 - Pakistan make 3-0 drubbing of NZ, Waqar Younis 29 series wkts
- 1991 - Palestinians attend US mideast peace talks in Madrid
- 1992 - Don Keller makes his 18,000th sky dive
- 1993 - 25 people killed during Ghana-Ivory Coast soccer match
- 1998 - Iraq disarmament crisis begins: Iraq announces it would no longer cooperate with United Nations weapons inspectors.
- 1999 - Roman Catholic Church and Lutheran Church leaders sign the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, ending a centuries-old doctrinal dispute over the nature of faith and salvation.
- 1999 - EgyptAir Flight 990 traveling from New York City to Cairo crashes off the coast of Nantucket, Massachusetts, killing all 217 on-board.
- 2000 - The last Multics (Multiplexed Information and Computing-Service) machine was shut down.
- 2000 - A chartered Antonov An-26 explodes after takeoff in Northern Angola killing 50
- 2000 - A Singapore Airlines Boeing 747-400 operating as Flight 006 collides with construction equipment upon takeoff in Taipei, Taiwan killing 79 passengers and four crew members
- 2002 - A federal grand jury in Houston, Texas formally indicted former Enron Corp. chief financial officer Andrew Fastow on 78 counts of wire fraud, money laundering, conspiracy and obstruction of justice related to the collapse of his ex-employer.
- 2003 - A bankruptcy court approves MC1's reorganization plans, essentially clearing the telecommunications company to exit bankruptcy.
- 2003 - Mahathir bin Mohamad resigns as Prime Minister of Malaysia and is replaced by Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, marking an end to Mahathir's 22 years in power.
- 2010 - Belgium leaves the recession with 0.5% growth in the third quarter
- 2011 - The world population reaches 7 billion inhabitants according to the United Nations
- 2015 - Russian airliner crashes killing all 224 on board in Sinai Peninsula, Egypt - Russia's worst air disaster
- 2015 Breeders Cup Classic: American Pharoah ridden by Victor Espinoza
- 2016 - Lebanon parliament elects Michel Aoun President after 2 1/2 years without a leader

## From KO Archives

## 6 of family hammered to death

Observer News Service

JAMMU: In a gruesome massacre, six members of a Bihari family, including four children, were done to death. Police said unidentified 'miscreants' used hammers to kill the la-bourer's family in their shop-cum-residence at Chapper Morh village in Kathua district in Jammu division yesterday.

The couple with their four children, hailing from Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh, were living in the village for last couple of years, police said.

The crime was allegedly committed by a group of people having rivalry with the couple, police said, adding a blood stained hammer was recovered from the scene. Police has rounded up seven suspects and investigation were continuing.

(Kashmir Observer, October 31, 2020)



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OBSERVER

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NO HOLDS BARRED



The poem relies on the iteration of ‘home’ to provide a chronicle of the tragedy and trauma of lived experience that constitutes home. Home is reimagined not as a geographical space but as paradoxical moments – transitory yet frozen.

Literary Ecriture

Resisting Dismemberment

One of the long standing disputes in the world – the Kashmir issue has primarily been a question of contestation over land and belonging. The recent order of the center to open up the sale of land in Kashmir strikes at the heart of this very question, and the question of dismemberment. It is imperative to understand, therefore, how poetry resists dismemberment.

Dismemberment of land brought about by subjugation also brings in a dismemberment of subjectivity. By identifying with the people who suffer this dismemberment, resistance poetry notes how subjugation is articulated on the ground. Accordingly, responding to it informs the new literary and cultural agendas of the poets of the resistance movements and liberation organizations. Faiz articulates this crisis in his poem ‘Clues of Blood (lahoo ka nishaan)’:

Destitute blood wept for recognition  
No one inclined to lend it an ear.  
Who would have lent it any attention?  
There was no plaintiff who could demand his due.  
No evidence existed.

Although the poem alludes to subjugation of the destitute in Pakistan, yet the universal relevance of the poem lies in the erasure of traumatized memory being a universal feature of imperialism. Thus, resistance movements have realized the need to rally against this dismemberment. While the resistance movements are organized political and guerilla movements for exercise of political choice; liberating culture from appropriation and establishing an autonomous culture free from domination and hegemonies of elites is equally important. However, this recovery must be carefully delineated, else a simple inversion runs the risk of remaining complicit with the colonial representations and articulating undifferentiated identities e.g. Kashmiriyat which erases the historical fissures and fractures between Kashmiri Muslims and Pandits while positing a culture posited as binary opposite of the culture of ‘radicalism’ that led to ‘expelling’ of KPs. The subjugated subject is product of what Benita Perry calls multiple constitutions, of the contradictions and over determinations of postcolonial ideological positions – having written of these as always negotiated and negotiable – and of ethnic and cultural difference as sites of articulation. Any singular conceptualizations of a national subject, culture or identity is bound to be reductive. Yet, this doesn’t necessarily imply that movements of resistance should abandon attempts to retrieve a national culture, even as a pre-colonial ethnic identity can only be an approximation at best and at worse a fabrication. Paradoxical as it may be, yet as Hall points out, the belief in such a cultural identity is quite crucial to aspirations of decolonization. He argues: the conception of ‘cultural identity’ in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective “one true self ... which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common continues to be a very powerful and creative force in emergent forms of representation amongst hitherto marginalized peoples ... We should not underestimate or neglect ... the importance of the act of imaginative rediscovery which this conception of a rediscovered essential identity entails.”

This is precisely the contradiction that Barbara Harlow, the first theorist of Resistance Literature, refers to when she asserts that resistance literatures are marked by articulating the contradictions of the larger movements. This accords it a moral superiority to narratives of subjugation, which insist on their authenticity, singularity and infallibility.

The poetry of the South African poet Mongane Serote is one such example of this informed rediscovery. He published his book, ‘The Night Keeps Winking’ in 1982 during his stay in Botswana as a refugee from South Africa, the country of his birth. As a black man, he suffered homelessness, exile and imprisonment at the hands of the white racist regime, which pushed him to participate in the Black Consciousness Movement. He also worked towards establishing the South African Black Theatre with the cultural committee of the South African Students Organization (SASO). He often invokes the past as an instrument for mobilizing the subjugated masses. In his poem, ‘Time has run out’, he employs the night and the moon as motifs to recreate the tragic history of the past:

The bright eye of the night keeps whispering and whispering

.....  
remember  
once long ago  
it hid the  
arrow  
it hid the spear  
it hid the lethal hand which fought and threw spears  
against the night of guns and canons  
.....  
remember the ship in the 16th century  
remember the Portuguese  
remember the arrow  
the night saw it all.

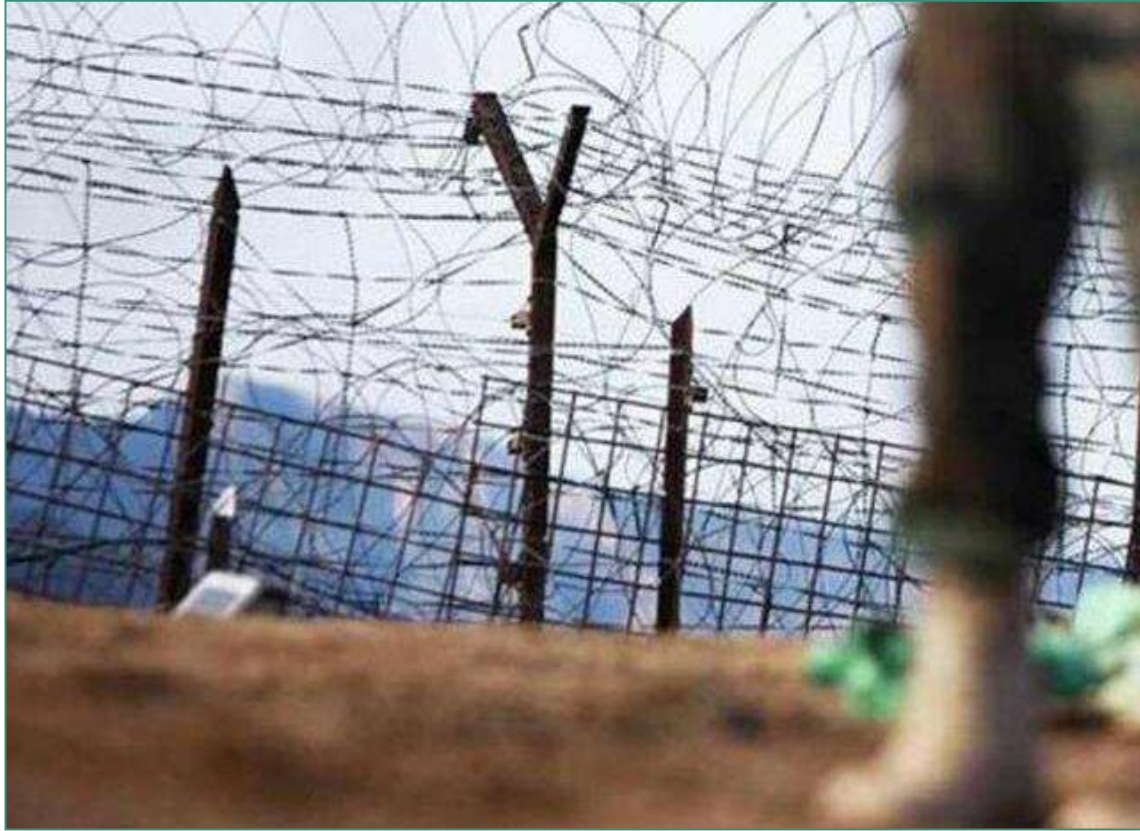
The poem employs the personified night to utilize its “bright eye” - the moon, to illuminate the glorious history of Africa’s struggle against colonization, when the ancestors “threw spears” at the “night of guns and canons” – the advent of white colonization. By invoking the past, Serote traces the resilience of people and their unshakable resolve to engage in a war against white imperialism,

therefore placing the current apartheid segregation as the latest manifestation of the same war.

Similarly, poetry from Kashmir demonstrates this trend in equal measure. The poetry of Ashaq Hussain Parray emerges as an example. In a poem titled ‘Home’ he writes:

Home is the sky hanging above us  
where we fly our prayers before  
we expose our thoughts and heartbeat  
for regular security check-ups  
lest we plant the seeds of love and dreams  
and plead guilty of a conspiracy.

Home is a suspended hand of the clock  
gifted by my first love in high school  
that has given up the race for existence  
and adopted wilful ignorance of the time  
unless the soldiers knock down its walls  
for the last supper on its dead parts.



The poem relies on the iteration of ‘home’ to provide a chronicle of the tragedy and trauma of lived experience that constitutes home. Home is reimagined not as a geographical space but as paradoxical moments – transitory yet frozen. While in the first stanza, home is the limitless sky of faith and possibility in escape, in the second stanza home is a static and frozen phantom of time represented by the stationary clock that reminds ala Miss Havisham of Great Expectations. In the first stanza, the seeds of love and dreams are forbidden since the crop they grow will be feasted upon by the soldiers. Alluding to the last supper of Christ, the poem reimagines home as articulated by vectors of death, martyrdom, betrayal and disappointment. The poem emerges as an extended mediation on the experience of being Kashmiri in the present, where Kashmir is at cross roads of disparate and unsettled histories. The poem reminds the subjugator that the poetics of memory speaks as a disjointed, and fractured voice that transcends the barricades of time and space of a coherent world held together by schisms and silences, and unfolds in a world of multiplicity and possibility.

Resistance movements are thus, engaged in the process of this recovery of a ‘national culture’ that serves to reinforce the difference between the subjugator and the subjugated. However, the poets, sympathizers and partisans of organizations engaged in this task of recovery don’t restrict themselves to just the local arena, but demonstrate in their poems a larger cosmopolitan sensibility. They recognize a larger network of solidarity, which recognizes the other movements of self-determination as ideological allies. It is a testimony to the “possibility that the identity struggle of one community can serve as a model for other resistance struggles, since the self-definition articulated by, say, the black or the Jew in defiance of received representations can be communicated to different situations of contest against the authority of the dominant by marginals, exiles and subjugated populations.” . Thus Chile’s Neruda wrote in praise of Augusto Sandino of Nicaragua whose organization FSLN (The Sandista National Liberation Front) found n 1961 removed the Somoza regime from power in July 1979. The Somoza regime was actively backed by America as it looked to exploit the country’s natural resources. Neruda writes:

Sandino took off the boots,  
Plunged into the quivering swamps  
Wore the wet ribbon  
Of freedom in the jungle  
And bullet by bullet he answered  
The ‘civilizers’.  
Sandino hanged the intruders  
The wall street heroes

Were devoured by the swamp  
A thunderbolt struck them down  
More than one machete followed them  
A noose awakened them  
Like a serpent in the night.

The poem eulogizes the protagonist Sardino as embodying the principles of justice in himself, and ensuring effective retaliation for the injustices meted out to the people. He is depicted as a true native - at home in the swamp and night, daring, swift and a conscience keeper of the ‘more than one machete’, a true leader who rallied the masses against the ‘civilizers’. In a similar vein, Jose Craverinha of Mozambique –supporter of FRELIMO (the Mozambique Liberation Front) writes about Nelson Mandela who fought against the racist apartheid regime in his poem “Since my friend Nelson Mandela went to live on Robben Island”:

Since the tribunal when my friend Nelson Mandela

Sentenced Mr John Vorster to everlasting prison  
And decided to live with a few people  
On a tranquil island  
It was shame that four million  
“whites only”  
Were detained in South Africa.

Inverting the notion of imprisonment, the poem depicts the racist and apartheid population as imprisoned within their own prejudices, and the prison of burden of injustice. Mandela, on the other hand, is depicted as the judge who pronounces the sentence, and thus alludes to the superiority of his character, and sacrifice. His imprisonment is transformed then from a harsh solitary confinement to a tranquil island, thus alluding to his heroic character.

This facet of resistance poetry is imminent in poetry from Kashmir too. In a poem titled ‘Imagining Palestine in Kashmir’ for example, Omair Bhat writes:

I always imagined a conversation with you,  
or someone, from the promised land,  
from Flisleen,  
dressed in paisleys of the language of Darwish,  
Kanafani and Tuqan (Arabic, oh, the arabic, the language  
of water, the language of resistance.)  
Someone like you, in war, someone  
alone, terribly alone,  
somewhere, digging madness of the wounds of revolutions,  
planting gardens of words in detonated bombshells.

Weaving allusions from Agha Shahid Ali, who translated Darwish, the poem emerges as a palimpsest that fuses the Kashmiri and the Palestinian self in its tribute. Palestine emerges as an alter-ego of Kashmir, in that both speak the language of resistance lonely and isolated in an increasingly disenchanting and uninterested world, seeking to evoke a poetics of resistance. The poem seeks to ‘plant gardens of words in detonated bombshells’ realizing that resistance has become existential, calling for a more sophisticated form of resistance, than merely against subjugation, and by celebrating grief, alerts us to the danger of time’s relentless sowing of the seeds of ruin, and to the basic lack of guarantees of any Palestinian and Kashmiri survival at all.

Huzaifa Pandit is the author of the recently published Green is the Colour of Memory, which won the first edition of Rhythm Divine Poets Chapbook Contest 2017. He holds a PhD on poetry of resistance from University of Kashmir



# Beacon of light

QASIM A. MOINI

Today, there will be celebrations throughout the country, and indeed, throughout the world. But do believers actually stop to think about how much of the “excellent example” that is the Noble Prophet’s character, we follow in our own lives? Some religious circles insist on adopting many outward aspects of the Sunnah — growing a beard, wearing a certain kind of attire, using miswak

THESE are indeed dark times. The world remains in the grip of a deadly pandemic that shows few signs of abating. Moreover, economic, political and ethno-religious crises continue to rage, as humankind looks for a way out, for a better tomorrow.

As the world in general continues to broil in this toxic mix of mostly man-made calamities, we in Pakistan face our own particular crises. Like the rest of the world we are not immune to the effects of Covid-19 or the attendant economic turbulence. But a recent spate of events — political instability, the Motorway tragedy, rampant cases of child abuse — point to our own considerable failings as a society.

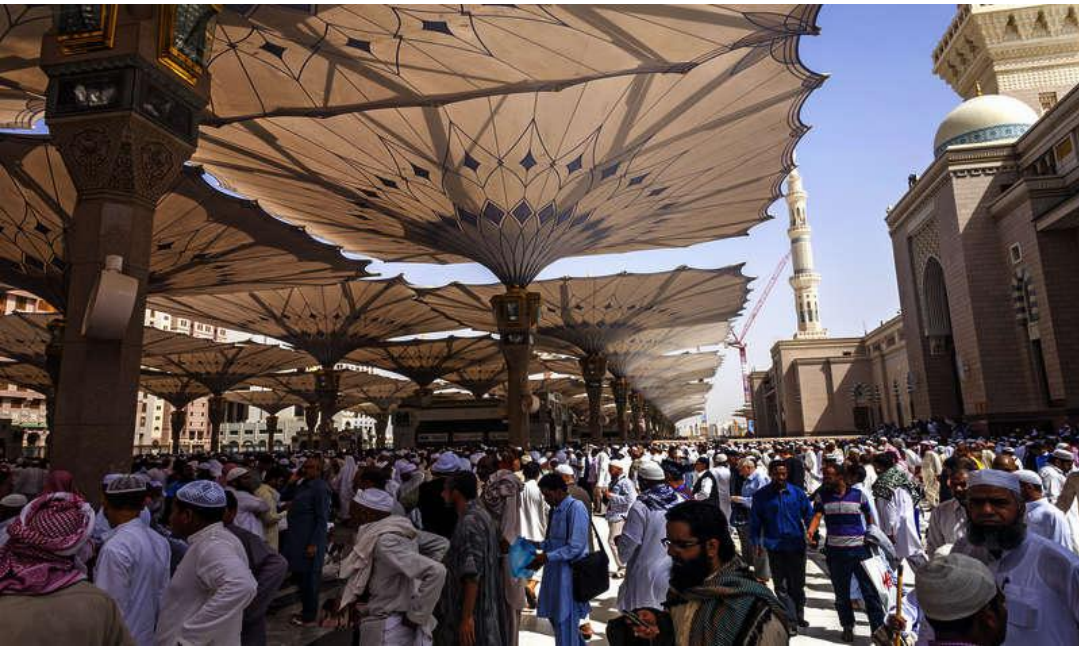
It would be easy to drone on and on about all that is wrong with us and the world around us. But as the Quran instructs, “So, verily, with every difficulty, there is relief.” (Surah As-Sharh). And following in the Quranic spirit, we look to the greatest exemplar, the Insaan-i-Kaamil, the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH), whose birth is being celebrated today, to find a way out of these dark times. For it is the Almighty that has dubbed the Noble Prophet “a beacon of light” or a “shining lamp” (Sirajum munira) in Surah Ahzab, that dispels the clouds of darkness and despair through the Nur-i-Muhammadi.

Today, there will be celebrations throughout the country, and indeed, throughout the world. But do believers actually stop to think about how much of the “excellent example” that is the Noble Prophet’s character, we follow in our own lives? Some religious circles insist on adopting many outward aspects of the Sunnah — growing a beard, wearing a certain kind of attire, using miswak etc. But have we thought about the deeper, batini aspects of his Sunnah that can be adopted, such as compassion, contemplation, and forgiveness, that have the potential to transform ourselves and our society?

The example of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is before us to find a way out of darkness.

Take, for example, the Holy Prophet’s treatment of women and children. Can we, who claim to love and follow him, honestly stake such a claim when we look at the state of women and children in our society?

Among the Ummahatul Momineen, the Holy Prophet’s wives, Bibi Khadija holds a prominent place. A noble lady of great wealth, she stood by the Messenger in the most testing of times due to her great belief in her husband and his message. Indeed, the marriage between Bibi Khadija and the Messenger was an example of how domestic rela-



tions should be conducted.

In the books of Seerah, we find nothing but respect and affection coming from the Prophet for this noble lady, a testament to her lofty character. In fact, when she left this mortal world, the year became known as Aam al Huzn (The year of sorrow) for in the space of this one year the Holy Prophet had lost two of his most steadfast supporters in Makkah: Bibi Khadija and his uncle Hazrat Abu Talib.

If those who believe in the Prophet in this country and beyond try to replicate the respect and affection the Messenger showed to his spouse, the lives of Muslim women could improve considerably. Instead, we cling to outdated notions of ‘honour’ and tribal customs to dictate our domestic affairs.

Coming to how the Messenger treated children, the affection he showered upon his daughter Bibi Fatima Zehra is exemplary. While the pagans of Makkah taunted the Messenger for being ‘issueless’ as none of his male children survived into adulthood, the Almighty saw things differently. Referring to Bibi Fatima, in Surah Kauthar the Quran says “...We have given thee Abundance” while in the same Surah declaring that the Prophet’s enemies are “without posterity”.

As recorded in hadith, the Noble Messenger showered great affection upon Bibi Fatima, standing up to greet her whenever she entered the room, declaring that “Fatima is a part of me, and he who makes her angry, makes me angry” (Bukhari).

Again, we, who follow the Prophet, need to ask ourselves how we treat our girl children. Unfortunately, like in the days of ignorance, the preference for male offspring makes many in this society neglect girl children when it comes to health, education and even nutrition. If we really wanted to show our love for the Prophet, there would be next to no street children roaming our cities and towns, susceptible to abuse. The state, or conscientious citizens, would have ensured that these most vulnerable members of society would have safe spaces where their childhood could be protected. Certainly, there is much distance to cover when it comes to practising what we preach.

While celebrations are great, and indeed an expression of our inner joy, let us also try and emulate the Holy Prophet in how he treated those around him, by adopting the ethical model he has left in the shape of his lofty personality.

Dawn

## Macron’s Crisis With Islam

MERVE SEBNEM ORUÇ

On Jan. 12, 2015, an estimated 3.7 million people rallied in shows of unity and solidarity across France with more than 40 world leaders marching with them shoulder to shoulder following the killings in Paris.

From Jan. 7-9, 17 people were killed by three terrorists in attacks on the satirical Charlie Hebdo magazine headquarters, a kosher grocery store and the general area of the Paris suburb of Montrouge.

Although the march was organized in a short amount of time, millions walked the streets of Paris chanting, “Je suis Charlie” (“I am Charlie”).

According to France’s Interior Ministry, the demonstration was larger than the rallies staged when Paris was liberated from the Nazis in World War II. The gathered crowd was described as the largest in France’s modern history.

Around the world, from Hong Kong to Tunisia, crowds gathered in major cities illuminating their famous monuments in the Tricolor.

### Hebdo and free speech

Charlie Hebdo is a satirical newspaper that has a reputation for standing up to authority, confronting what is held sacred or questioning any group claiming supremacy.

After publishing cartoons that mocked Islam on a number of occasions, in 2015 the magazine printed numerous images that insulted the Prophet Muhammad in a move that provoked Muslims for who drawing the prophet is considered blasphemous and prohibited in the Quran. In simple terms, the editors of the “irresponsible magazine” (their own words) hurt the feelings of believers of Islam.

The Charlie Hebdo attack was different than other massacres because it was seen as an attack on freedom of speech. In the wake of the attack, the world seemed to me, to think that there was nothing more important than the freedom of expression. I personally believed the holy principle of freedom of speech was superior to everything.

If that were the case, people would have the right to freely express all of their opinions regardless of whether they criticize or mock what is sacred to others. I was aware that the French law didn’t protect unrestricted free speech.

For example, condoning terrorism is a crime and denying the Holocaust is banned in France. But after the millions-strong march, I thought things had changed as the streets of Paris felt like an outdoor temple revering in divine free speech that day. But I was wrong. A few days after the historic rally, French authorities began to arrest people on charges of glorifying or defending terrorism online.

It was time for nations to better understand why disaffected citizens were joining radical causes. There should be efforts to get to the root of the problem especially in Western countries, such as France where the Muslim population is around 5 million.

Unfortunately, the French government chose to follow an extreme version of secularism or laic-

ity. Depicting the Charlie Hebdo attack as France’s 9/11, the country started to change radically, maybe more so than that the U.S. was changed after the fall of the Twin Towers.

The popularity of the former French President François Hollande, a socialist, hit rock bottom and support for the far-right leader Marine Le Pen increased.

In 2017, Emmanuel Macron went head-to-head against Le Pen in the second round of the presidential elections after a first-round vote brought centrist, left-wing and moderate voters together against a possible far-right presidency.

Coming to power as a centrist and having no established party, ideology or tradition, Macron was free to govern France for a full five years avoiding populist extremism, which was rapidly spreading across Europe and beyond.

He was viewed as the one liberal, democratic politician who could stem the tide of populism sweeping the globe. However, he has become the most populist leader in Europe.

His supporters rationalize his policies saying

Macron has no tolerance for Islam but at the same time asks Muslims to be tolerant of insults toward their religion. If it continues like this, the problem won't be the prohibition of respecting Islamic values but the active obligation to attack them.

If Macron didn’t do something about the populist threat he would be replaced by a far-right leader. As the protests of yellow vests began in November 2018, his approval ratings sank to 29%.

While his globalist supporters went quiet, Macron may have thought he would not be able to secure his seat by continuing to take on the populists who were gaining ground every day, opting to embrace populism instead.

### The rhetoric of hatred

The French president did not stop there and gradually adopted a strong anti-Islamist rhetoric intended to draw in the Islamophobes. Today, so-called “secular” hatred towards Muslims has become a part of everyday speech for the French government as well as its media. French Muslims keep asking Macron to stop stigmatizing them, but his normalization of hate speech against Islam has almost legitimized the institutionalized discrimination towards the French’s Muslim community.

Taking further steps, the French President recently said “Islam is a religion that is in crisis all over the world today, we are not just seeing this in our country.” Adding that he is seeking to “liberate” Islam in France from foreign influences by improving the oversight of mosque financing. He announced a law against religious “separatism” and outlined new measures to “defend the republic and its values and ensure it respects its promises of

equality and emancipation.”

Stating, “secularism is the cement of a united France,” Macron also defended “the right” to commit blasphemy, in a nod to the Charlie Hebdo cartoons insulting Islam. He expects all French citizens to respect the values of the Republic while he does not respect the values of Muslims.

Macron has no tolerance for Islam but at the same time asks Muslims to be tolerant of insults toward their religion. If it continues like this, the problem won’t be the prohibition of respecting Islamic values but the active obligation to attack them.

Unfortunately, there have been more tragic incidents in France as a result of Islamophobia and extremism. Last week a school teacher was beheaded by an extremist for showing cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad during a class, while two Muslim women were stabbed under the Eiffel Tower as the attackers shouted “Dirty Arabs” this week. We will continue to see cases like these if the French government continues to encourage Islamophobia.

Noticing the double standards between freedom

of speech and freedom of religion after the Charlie Hebdo attack, many Muslims around the world came to see the event as a milestone. From that day onwards they knew Islam would be attacked again under the pretext of being a non-peaceful religion and these attacks would not be limited to harsh words or insults.

Charlie Hebdo actually paved the way for extremists, who were looking for a pretext to attack, one of whom pledged allegiance to Daesh and the other two declared their loyalty to al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). A Yemeni branch of al-Qaida took responsibility for the deadly attack against Charlie Hebdo, claiming the al-Qaida leadership chose the target and the massacre was in retaliation to the depictions mocking the Prophet Muhammad.

All Muslim countries, including the French Muslim community, immediately condemned the Charlie Hebdo attack. As radicalization began to spread, particularly since the evolution of the Daesh terrorist group, Muslim countries played a major role in fighting the notorious terror organization. However, their efforts were not enough to stifle the rise of Islamophobia around the world as Islamophobic incidents including far-right terrorism, motivated by a variety of ideologies, started to increase.

In France, more than 1,000 Islamophobic incidents occurred in 2019 including 70 physical at-

tacks. While intelligence agencies in the West warn that white supremacists are becoming a more dangerous threat every day, countries like France do not listen. Fortunately, not all of the Western countries follow the same path.

### The Christchurch attack

Last year, Australian Brenton Tarrant killed 50 Muslim worshippers in a terrorist attack on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand – a usually peaceful country.

This time there were no global marches for the victims, no promises of solidarity and unity from other countries, no condemnation or warning of rising extremism from world leaders.

Other than Muslim countries, only German Chancellor Angela Merkel described the mosque attacks as “terrorism” when expressing her sorrow over the “citizens who were attacked and murdered out of racist hatred.”

Regardless of the lack of support she received from the rest of the Western world, New Zealand’s Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern worked her hardest to ease the pain of the families of the victims.

She took a decisive stand against terrorism in a world where even liberal leaders cater to white-supremacists in a bid to keep votes. In her own words, her role was to “voice the grief of a nation.”

She was the face of New Zealand and denounced terrorist attacks to the world. Following the attack she visited the families of the victims, wearing a headscarf to show respect, and promised to ensure their safety in mosques across the country.

Ardern opened the next session of New Zealand Parliament with an evocative “Assalamu alaikum” message of peace to Muslims and vowed never to utter the name of the terrorist. “He is a terrorist. He is a criminal. He is an extremist. But he will, when I speak, be nameless,” she said.

There was a recitation from the Quran, a tribute to the souls of the Muslims killed in the attacks. In the following days she declared a ban on all military-style-rifles, including assault and military-like semi-automatic rifles. The enthusiastic public showings of support for Ardern has now come to be known as “Jacindamania.”

This week, Ardern won a landslide victory in the country’s general elections. She has led the center-left Labor Party to its best result in 50 years, winning 49.1% of the vote.

Western leaders such as Emmanuel Macron may think that tolerance towards Islam and Muslims would destroy their political career but in fact it has been the making of others just like Jacinda Ardern.

Ardern has been depicted as “anti-populist” in the media for a long time and we can credit her victory to her sympathy and compassion. Uniting the country she has been an example to other world leaders who adopt populist rhetoric out of fear of being replaced by right-wing politicians and whose policies cause divisions. I know I am trying to keep the faith, but what will be left to us if we also lose hope.

Daily Sabah





# Positive Student-Teacher Relationships Benefit Students’ Long-Term Health

**Agencies**

Teens who have good, supportive relationships with their teachers enjoy better health as adults, suggested the study published by the American Psychological Association.

Friendships are important to adolescents. Perhaps, in a surprising result, the study did not find the same link between good peer relationships and students’ health in adulthood.

“This research suggests that improving students’ relationships with teachers could have important, positive and long-lasting effects beyond just academic success,” said Jinho Kim, PhD, an assistant professor in the Department of Health Policy and Management at Korea University and author of the study. It was published in the journal School Psychology. “It could also have important health implications in the long run.”

Previous research has suggested that teens’ social relationships might be linked to health outcomes in adulthood - perhaps because poor relationships can lead to chronic stress, which can raise a person’s risk of health problems over the lifespan, according to Kim. However, it is not clear whether the link between teen relationships and lifetime health is causal.

To explore those questions

further, Kim analysed data on nearly 20,000 participants from the Add Health study, a nationally representative longitudinal study in the United States that followed participants for 13 years, from seventh grade into early adulthood. The participant pool included more than 3,400 pairs of siblings. As teens, participants answered questions such as, “How often have you had trouble getting along with other students?” “How much

do you agree that friends care about you?” “How often have you had trouble getting along with your teachers?” and “How much do you agree that teachers care about you?” As adults, participants were asked about their physical and mental health. Researchers also took measures of physical health, such as blood pressure and body mass index.

Kim found that, as expected, participants who had reported better relationships with both their peers and teachers in middle school and high school also reported better physical and mental health in their mid-20s. However, when he controlled for family background by looking at pairs of siblings together, only the link between good teacher relationships and adult health remained significant.

This could be because previously reported links between peer relationships and physical health could actually reflect other, underlying factors about students’ family background.

The results suggest that teacher relationships are even more important than previously realised and that schools should invest in training teachers on how to build warm and supportive relationships with their students, according to Kim.

“This is not something that most teachers receive much training in,” he said, “but it should be.”

## Positive Outlook Predicts Less Memory Decline, Finds Study

**Agencies**

A new study published in the journal Psychological Science found that people who feel enthusiastic and cheerful -- what psychologists call "positive affect" -- are less likely to experience memory decline as they age. This result adds to a growing body of research on positive affect's role in healthy ageing.

A team of researchers analyzed data from 991 middle-aged and older U.S. adults who participated in a national study conducted at three time periods: between 1995 and 1996, 2004 and 2006, and 2013 and 2014.

In each assessment, participants reported on a range of positive emotions they had experienced during the past 30 days. In the final two assessments,



The researchers examined the association between positive affect and memory decline, accounting for age, gender, education, depression, negative affect, and extraversion.

“Our findings showed that memory declined with age,” said Claudia Haase, an associate professor at Northwestern University and senior author on the paper. “However, individuals with higher levels of positive affect had a less steep memory decline over the course of almost a decade,” added Emily Hittner, a PhD graduate of Northwestern University and the paper’s lead author.

Areas of future research might address the pathways that could connect positive affect and memory, such as physical health or social relationships.

participants also completed tests of memory performance. These tests consisted of recalling words immediately after their presentation and again 15 minutes later.

## Cognitive Disorders May Increase Risk Of Severe Covid-19: Study

**Agencies**

Researchers have claimed that dementia and other cognitive disorders now appear to be the risk factors for developing severe Covid-19.

The findings, published in the journal 'Brain, Behavior and Immunity', highlight the need for special care for populations with these pre-existing conditions during the pandemic.

“We took a hypothesis-free approach and the most statistically significant ones are the cognitive disorders and Type 2 diabetes,” said study senior author Kaixiong Ye from the University of Georgia in the US.

“Right now, we don't know the mechanisms behind these associations, we only know these are more common in Co-



vid-19 patients,” Ye added.

In a blind study, the researchers analysed data from nearly 1,000 diseases and two specific genes to compare the health profiles of Covid patients with those testing negative, looking for commonalities in the patients.

The study relied on data from UK Biobank, a long-term study of more than 5,00,000 participants investigating the respective contributions of genetic predisposition and environmental exposure to the de-

velopment of the disease.

Analysing the genetic factors that make some individuals at higher risk for severe Covid-19, the team focused on two genes: ACE2 and TMPRSS2, known to be critical for the virus to enter into human cells. “In the TMPRSS2 gene, we found that a specific genetic variation is more common in the Covid-19 patients,” Ye said, adding that while the discovery was novel at the time, the team knows more data now exists about host genetic factors than even three months ago.

The research team also found that variations in genes related to SARS-CoV-2 infection may be associated with severe Covid-19 that requires hospitalization.

“And we are starting to understand how those genetic variations are making a difference,” Ye stressed.

“Working on one disease, the whole field is converging together, around the world, at the same time. It really showcases the power of science,” he said.

“What my group is doing is really just data analysis, large-scale data mining, but from vaccine development to studies in patients, scientists are attacking the disease from different aspects, and that’s moving us forward very quickly in combating Covid-19,” the study author wrote.

## Study Reveals Impact Of Family Structure On Puberty Onset In Girls

**Agencies**

Girls who do not live with both parents from birth to age two may be at higher risk of starting puberty at a younger age than girls living with both parents, suggests recent research. The results of the research were published in the open-access journal BMC Pediatrics. The authors suggest that their findings support the hypothesis that stress in early life may influence puberty onset. The risk of early puberty onset could potentially be mitigated by interventions aiming to improve child wellbeing, according to the authors. A team of researchers from Kaiser Permanente Northern California Division

of Research, USA, found that girls who did not live with both parents from birth to age two were 38% more likely to begin their period before the age of 12 compared with girls who lived with both parents. Girls who did not live with both parents between the ages of two and six were 18% more likely than girls whose parents lived together to begin their period before the age of 12.

Ai Kubo, the corresponding author said: “Stress experienced before age two may have a stronger influence on puberty onset than stress experienced by older children. Early puberty is associated with an increased risk of mental and emotional problems during adolescence. In addition, girls who begin puberty

early are at increased risk for various conditions such as heart disease and breast and uterine cancer. For the purpose of this study, we investigated living with one or two parents as a way to assess the potential stress a young girl may experience. Our research could be used to guide healthcare interventions to identify and support girls who may be at higher risk of early puberty.”

The authors also found that girls who did not live with both parents from birth to age two were 29% more likely to begin developing breasts earlier and 21% more likely to start the growth of pubic hair earlier, compared to girls who lived with both parents. Girls who did not



live with both parents between the ages of two and six were 13% more likely to start developing breasts and 15% more likely to start developing pubic hair earlier than girls

who lived with both parents.

To examine the family structure and puberty onset in girls the authors used electronic health record data of girls born between 2003 and

2010 within the Kaiser Permanente Northern California healthcare system. Out of the 26,044 girls included in the study, 2,034 (8%) lived with one parent before the age of two and 2,186 (8%) lived with one parent between the ages of two and six.

The authors observed that the risk of earlier puberty onset varied by racial and ethnic background. Among all the Black, White and Latinx girls included in the study, approximately 30%, 5.6% and 9.6% lived in a household with only one parent before age two. Black, White and Latinx girls who lived with one parent before the age of two were 60%, 24% and 30% more likely to start developing breasts earlier compared to girls of similar ethnicity who lived with both parents.

Girls who were Black or White who lived with one parent between the ages of two and six were 44% and 21% more likely to begin breast development early, compared to girls who lived with both parents. Latinx girls raised by a single parent between ages two and six were no more likely to begin breast development early than girls who lived with two parents. Girls' BMI did not significantly influence the association between living in a single-parent household and earlier puberty onset, according to the authors. However, other factors such as socioeconomic status, perceived stress, or adverse childhood events may further explain the differences.



## Pompeo wraps up anti-China tour of Asia in Vietnam

Press Trust Of India

Washington: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is wrapping up an anti-China tour of Asia in Vietnam as the fierce American presidential election race enters its final stretch.

With just four days left in the campaign in which China has been a central theme, Pompeo was visiting Hanoi on Friday ostensibly to celebrate 25 years of US-Vietnam relations. But as



he has at his previous stops in India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Indonesia, Pompeo is expected to highlight the Trump administration's antipathy toward China, its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, its human rights record and aggressiveness towards its smaller neighbours.

Those issues, particularly the Chinese origin of the virus, have been highlighted by President Donald Trump as he seeks to beat back a stiff reelection challenge from former Vice President Joe Biden in the Nov. 3 polls. Trump has sought to paint

Biden as weak on China and beholden to it, repeatedly raising questions about alleged connections between Biden's son, Hunter, and Chinese businesses.

Vietnam was a late addition to Pompeo's itinerary and has numerous concerns about Chinese policies in the region. Those range from Beijing's territorial and maritime claims in the South China Sea to its development activities along the Mekong River, which runs through much of mainland Southeast Asia and is a regional lifeline.

In a statement released ahead of Pompeo's arrival in Vietnam, the US State Department attacked China for reneging on cooperation pledges with other Mekong countries and for aggressively pursuing suspect claims in the South China Sea.

"China's malign and destabilising actions in the Mekong region, including manipulation of Mekong river water flows, negatively affect millions of people who depend on the river for their livelihoods," it said.

The United States stands with our Indo-Pacific allies and partners in protecting their sovereign rights to offshore resources in the South China Sea, consistent with their rights and obligations under international law, it said. It noted that earlier this year, Pompeo had rejected outright nearly all of Beijing's maritime claims in the South China Sea.

## Trump vs Biden: The bookmakers' \$1bn election

Agencies

Washington: The US presidential election is proving a boon for bookmakers, with estimates that more than \$1bn has already been bet on the winner around the world even before polling day.

Matthew Shaddick, head of political betting at British sports betting and gambling firm GVC, said that is double the amount in 2016, when Donald Trump upset the odds and polls to beat Hillary Clinton.

Republican candidate Trump is once again the outsider, with his Democratic challenger Joe Biden the favourite with GVC's gaming brands, which include Ladbrokes, Coral and BWIN.

Its rival, William Hill, also has former Vice President Biden tipped for victory.

"This is a huge market," Shaddick told AFP news agency.



"It is twice as big as 2016, easily making it the biggest political event ever.

"It might be the biggest ever market on anything pretty much and outstrip football worldwide. I guess a billion pounds [\$1.3bn] is being bet."

William Hill said they also expect the election to be easily its biggest event of the year, given the cancellation of money-spinners such as the Grand National due to COVID-19.

"We are already over £3 million [\$3.9m] and expect to take £10 million [\$13m]," said Hill's international spokesman Rupert Adams.

"We predict that this will be the biggest wagering event of 2020. The figures are simply astounding and include all sporting events."

For Adams, the huge amounts laid on Tuesday's vote are largely down to the love-him-or-loathe-him personality of Trump.



## Macron's Islamophobia Unleashes Waves Of Protest, Boycott, Diplomatic Rebuke In Muslim World

Anger continues to grow across the Muslim world after French President Emmanuel Macron publicly attacked Islam in defense of the publication of derogatory cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Earlier in October, France led a national tribute to a teacher, who was recently beheaded by a Chechen teenager after showing his class the offensive caricatures. The president said he would not "renounce the caricatures." He described Islam as a religion "in crisis" and declared war on "Islamist separatism," which he claimed was taking over France's estimated six-million-strong Muslim population.

The comments have angered not only the Muslim community in France, but all Islamic nations, leading to protests, boycott calls and diplomatic condemnations in the Middle East and the broader Muslim world.

Tens of thousands stage anti-France rally in Bangladesh

On Tuesday, tens of thousands of people took to the streets in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka to express their anger at French President Emmanuel Macron's comments.

More than 40,000 people took part in the march organized by Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB), one of the largest Islamic parties in the South Asian country.

During the march, which started from the Baitul Mukarram national mosque, the protesters called for a boycott of French products and burnt an effigy of the French leader.

They chanted "Boycott French products" and called for Macron to be punished.

"Macron is one of the few leaders who worship Satan," Ataur Rahman, a senior IAB leader addressed the rally at Bangladesh's biggest mosque.

Rahman also called on the Bangladesh government to "kick out" the French ambassador, Jean-Marie Schueh.

Another Islami Andolon Bangladesh leader, Hasan Jamal, said activists would "tear down every

brick of that building" if the envoy was not ordered out.

"France is the enemy of Muslims. Those who represent them are also our enemies," Nesar Uddin, a young leader of the group, said.

Hundreds of police officers used a barbed-wire barricade to stop the protesters from getting close to the French embassy.

Demonstrators marched down other streets after police intervened, chanting "Boycott France" and "Macron will pay a high price."

Iraqis demand apology, boycott

On Monday, hundreds of people staged rallies outside the



Activists and supporters of the Islami Andolon Bangladesh, a Islamist political party, hold a protest march calling for the boycott of French products and denouncing French president Emmanuel Macron for his comments over Prophet Muhammad caricatures, in Dhaka on October 27, 2020. (Photo by AFP)

French embassy in Iraq to condemn the move. The protesters burned France's national flag near the country's diplomatic mission in the capital Baghdad, in the latest display of anger in the Muslim world over the images and Macron's comments.

The demonstrators also held up posters showing caricatures of the European leader and chanted slogans in support of the Prophet.

"These (Macron's) statements jeopardize global security and harmony since they damage the coexistence between different religions. We condemn these statements and we ask the French president to apologize to all Muslims," Abu Ayman, a protester, said.

Aqil al-Kadhemi, a cleric at the rally, also demanded an "apology to all Muslims because the Prophet is a symbol of Islam and Muslims."

"We are demonstrating to denounce and strongly disapprove" of Macron's comments, Kadhemi told AFP at the protest.

Other protesters called for a boycott of French products, like those already underway in supermarkets in the Persian Gulf kingdoms of Qatar and Kuwait, and demanded in Jordan and Turkey.

Moreover, Iraq's Islamic Dawa Party strongly condemned Macron's comments against Islam and demanded that he apologize.

In a provocative move that hurt the feelings of Muslims, Macron "has defended publication of caricatures offending Prophet

## 4 dead, 120 injured in Turkey as strong earthquake hits Aegean Sea

Agencies

Ankara: A strong earthquake struck on Friday between the Turkish coast and the Greek island of Samos, collapsing several buildings in Turkey's western Izmir province and leaving at least four people dead.

Dozens more were injured, while some damage to buildings and the road network, and four light injuries were also reported on Samos.

Turkey's Health Minister Fahrettin Koca tweeted that four people were killed in Izmir and 120 were injured. He said 38 ambulances, two ambulance helicopters and 35 medical rescue teams were working in Izmir.

of the earthquake at 6.6, while the United States Geological Survey said it was 7.0. It struck at around 1150 GMT and was felt along Turkey's Aegean coast and the northwestern Marmara region, media said. The epicentre was some 17 kilometres off the coast of the Izmir province, at a depth of 16 km, AFAD said. The US Geological Survey said the depth was 10 km and that the epicentre was 33.5km off Turkey's coast.

Residents of Samos, an island with a population of about 45,000, were urged to stay away from coastal areas. Eftyhmios Lekkas, head of Greece's organisation for anti-seismic planning, told Greece's Skai TV.



People flooded to the streets in the Turkish coastal city of Izmir after the earthquake struck, witnesses said. Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD) put the magnitude

"It was a very big earthquake, it's difficult to have a bigger one," said Lekkas.

Ali Yerlikaya, the governor of Istanbul, where the quake was also felt, said there were no negative reports.

## US University's New Face Mask Can Inactivate Coronavirus Using Heat

Agencies

Boston: Scientists at MIT have designed a novel face mask that can not only filter out the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, but also inactivate it using heat.

The new mask incorporates a heated copper mesh and does not need to be decontaminated or thrown away after use, according to the researchers.

As the person wearing the mask breathes in and out, air flows repeatedly across the mesh, and any viral particles in the air are slowed and inactivated by the mesh and high temperatures, the researchers said.

Such a mask could be useful for healthcare professionals, as well as members of the public in situations where social distancing would be difficult to achieve, such as a crowded bus, they said.

"This is a completely new mask concept in that it doesn't primarily block the virus. It actually lets the virus go through the mask, but slows and inactivates it," said Michael Strano, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the US.

The researchers have begun building prototypes and hope to begin testing them soon.

The new design has been described in a paper posted on online preprint server ArXiv, and submitted to a peer-reviewed journal.

"The masks that we wear now are designed to capture some of the virus. They do offer protection, but there's no one really thinking about inactivating the virus and sterilising the air. That surprised me," Strano said.

The researchers set out to design a mask that would kill viruses using heat.

They decided to use copper mesh as the heating and capture element, and performed some mathematical modelling to determine the optimal temperature range needed to kill coronaviruses flowing inwards or outwards from natural breathing.

The vast majority of masks today function by filtration, filtering particles by size or electric charge," said MIT graduate student Samuel Faucher, the lead author of the study.

Agencies

## NEWSMAKERS

### Twitter Deletes Ex-Malaysian PM's Tweet For Glorifying Attack In France

Paris: Social networking platform Twitter on Thursday removed former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad's tweet, for violating its rules banning the glorification of violence, shortly after a violent knife attack in Nice, which left three people dead.

The tweet sparked an angry outburst on social media with many users calling out the former Malaysian prime minister.

Cedric O, France's Secretary for Digital Sector also condemned the post and urged Twitter to suspend the account of the former Malaysian prime minister and said in a tweet: "If not, Twitter would be an accomplice to a formal call for murder."

"I just spoke with the Managing Director of Twitter France. The account of former Malaysian PM Mahathir Mohamad must be immediately suspended. If not, Twitter would be an accomplice to a formal call for murder," Cedric O tweeted.



Twitter first labelled the tweet with a disclaimer stating that the posting violated its rules but was being left up because it was in public interest. The networking site later completely deleted the tweet but left the remaining of the Twitter thread intact.

This comes following French President Emmanuel Macron's

criticism of radical Islam after a school teacher, was beheaded by an 18-year-old for showing cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammed in class.

In a series of 13 tweets, Mahathir Mohamad posting from his personal Twitter handle lashed out at Macron for not being "civilised" and for being "very primitive

in blaming the religion of Islam and Muslims for the killing of the school teacher".

France's Secretary of State's remarks comes after another attack was witnessed on Thursday where a knife-wielding man killed two women and a man at the Notre-Dame Basilica in Nice and injured several others. The police detained the attacker and launched an investigation on terrorism grounds.

The attack in Nice was followed by a knife-stabbing attempt in France's southeastern city of Avignon and another one at the French Consulate in Saudi Arabia.

A few days ago, Samuel Paty, a school teacher, was beheaded by an 18-year-old teenager on the outskirts of Paris after he showed cartoons depicting the Prophet during a lesson. Paty was posthumously granted France's highest award, the Legion d'Honneur, and commemorated in the national ceremony at the Sorbonne University in Paris.

### In Armenia-Azerbaijan Fight, Even A McDonald's Is Taking Sides

In Azerbaijan, as elsewhere, McDonald's and Burger King stores tend to use their Instagram accounts to post photos of burgers and fries. But a few weeks ago, the tone took a turn.

After military clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia broke out last month, fast-food franchisees began to weigh in on behalf of Azerbaijan.

The posts, which have since been removed, came amid the worst outbreak of fighting since the 1990s over the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region, a breakaway ethnic Armenian enclave within the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. Fighting there left some 30,000 people dead and more than 1 million displaced before the sides agreed to a cease-fire in 1994, but flare-ups have broken out since.

The enclave functions largely as an independent state, controlled by political factions linked to Armenia. But Azerbaijan sees it as occupied territory.

"Every inch of the land of the Motherland is beloved," one Instagram post on a verified McDonald's account read, alongside a map showing Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan.

"Victory is with you, Azerbaijani

Soldier!" a Burger King branch posted. "Karabakh is Azerbaijan." The account, while not officially verified by Instagram, appeared to host promotional materials dating back years, to its opening.



In a statement Tuesday to The Washington Post, a McDonald's corporate spokesperson confirmed that a franchisee in Azerbaijan had removed the social media content in question but would not respond to questions about the company's policies on political speech on the part of local stores.



## Kerala Best Governed State, Says Bengaluru Non-Profit Headed By Ex-ISRO Chief



**BENGALURU:** Kerala was adjudged the best governed state in the country while Uttar Pradesh ended at the bottom in the large states category, according to the Public Affairs Index-2020 released by the Public Affairs Centre in Bengaluru today.

In its annual report released today, the Bengaluru-based not-for-profit organisation, headed by former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman K Kasturirangan, said the states were ranked on governance performance based on a composite index in the context of sustainable development.

Four southern states, Kerala (1.388 PAI Index point), Tamil Nadu (0.912), Andhra Pradesh (0.531) and Karnataka (0.468) stood in the first four ranks in the large state category in terms of governance, it said.

Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Bihar were at the bottom of

the ranking, scoring negative points in the category. They got -1.461, -1.201 and -1.158 points respectively.

In the small state category, Goa ranked first with 1.745 points, followed by Meghalaya (0.797) and Himachal Pradesh (0.725).

Worst performers who scored negative points are Manipur (-0.363), Delhi (-0.289) and Uttarakhand (-0.277), according to the PAC report.

Chandigarh emerged the best governed union territory in the category of UTs with 1.05 PAI points, followed by Puducherry (0.52) and Lakshadweep (0.003). Dadar and Nagar Haveli (-0.69), Andaman, Jammu and Kashmir (-0.50) and Nicobar (-0.30) were the least performers.

According to the PAC, the governance performance is analysed in the context of sustainable development defined by three pillars of equity, growth and sustainability.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Kasturirangan said: "The evidence that PAI 2020 generates and the insights that it provides must compel us to reflect on the economic and social transition that is underway in India."

**ACCORDING TO THE PAC, THE governance performance is analysed in the context of sustainable development defined by three pillars of equity, growth and sustainability.**

## Maharashtra: Woman, Partner Crushed Under Tractor Over 'Illicit Relationship'; In-Laws Arrested



**JALNA:** Police have arrested two in-laws of a woman on charges of killing her and her partner, who were crushed under a tractor in Jalna district of Maharashtra allegedly over an "illicit relationship", an official said on Friday.

The accused, Bathwell Sampat Lalzare and his son Vikas Lalzare, residents of Chapalgan village under Ghansawangi tehsil, were arrested on Thursday, said Ambad police inspector Aniruddha Nandedkar.

Bathwell Lalzare is the father-in-law of the deceased woman Mariya, a widow, while Vikas Lalzare is her brother-in-law, he said.

The police said the 32-year-old Mariya Lalzare's husband died 10 years ago, and she lived with her in-laws.

She was in a relationship with a married man, Harbak Bhagwat (27), a resident of the same village, they said.

Her in-laws opposed their relationship and threatened Bhagwat with dire consequences when they came to know about it, the police said.

Bhagwat had filed a complaint at the Ambad police sta-

tion and with the district SP against the father-son duo, and also claimed there was a threat to his life from them, they said.

On March 30, Bhagwat and Mariya had eloped and reached Gujarat after which a missing complaint was lodged with the police by her family, they said.

On April 22, the police brought them back from Gujarat and since then they were living together in the village, they said.

On October 28, both were headed on a motorcycle to a nearby village to attend a programme when the accused Vikas Lalzare allegedly hit their motorbike with the tractor and crushed them under the wheels, the police said.

The wounded couple was rushed to a hospital, but they succumbed to injuries on the way, the police said.

The wife of Bhagwat accused Vikas Lalzare and his father of killing her husband and Mariya, they said.

"We have registered a case against Vikas and his father under IPC section 302 (murder). Further investigation is going on," said inspector Nandedkar. PTI



**DEVOTEES** following Covid protocol offer Friday prayers on Eid-e-Milad-un-Nabi at Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar... KO Photo Abid Bhat

## First Phase Of Malabar Exercise To Take Place From Nov 3-6 In Bay Of Bengal

**T**he first phase of the Malabar naval exercise featuring navies of India, the US, Japan and Australia will take place from November 3 to 6 in the Bay of Bengal off Visakhapatnam coast, officials said on Friday.

The second phase of the mega exercise is scheduled to be held from November 17 to 20 in the Arabian sea, they said.

Last week, India announced that Australia will be part of the Malabar exercise which effectively makes it a drill by all four member nations of the Quad or Quadrilateral coalition.

The invitation by India to the Australian Navy for the exercise came two weeks after foreign ministers of the 'Quad' member nations held extensive talks in Tokyo with a focus on enhancing



their cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

The officials said the first phase of the drill would witness complex and advanced naval exercises, including surface, anti-submarine and anti-air warfare operations, besides cross-deck flying, seamanship evolutions and weapon firing exercises.

The Malabar exercise started in

1992 as a bilateral drill between the Indian Navy and the US Navy in the Indian Ocean. Japan became a permanent member of the exercise in 2015.

The annual exercise was conducted off the coast of Guam in the Philippine Sea in 2018 and off the coast of Japan in 2019.

The Indian Navy will deploy a number of key platforms in the exercise which will include destroyer Ranvijay, frigate Shivalik, off-shore patrol vessel Sukanya, fleet support ship Shakti and submarine Sindhuraj.

In addition, advanced jet trainer Hawk, long-range maritime patrol aircraft P-8I, Dornier maritime patrol aircraft, and a number of helicopters will also be participating in the exercise, the officials said.

## Loan Moratorium: Agri Loans Not Eligible For Interest-On-Interest Waiver

**A**griculture and allied activity loans are not eligible for the interest on interest waiver announced by the government last week, the finance ministry has clarified. Issuing additional frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the 'scheme for grant of ex-gratia payment of difference between compound interest and simple interest', it said credit card dues outstanding as on February 29 would be considered for giving relief to the borrowers.

The benchmark rate applicable for such relief would be the contract rate, which is used by the credit card issuers for the purpose of EMI loans, it added.

Crop and tractor loans come under agriculture and allied activities loans and are not part of the eight segments or classes eligible under the scheme, it added.

The relief shall cover the following segments—MSME loans, education loans, housing loans, consumer durable loans, credit card dues, automobile loans, personal loans to professionals and consumption loans—according to the FAQs released by the ministry earlier on Wednesday.

The Reserve Bank had on Tuesday asked all lending institutions, including non-banking financial companies,



to ensure that the scheme of waiver of interest on interest for loans up to Rs 2 crore for the six-month moratorium period is implemented by November 5, as decided by the government.

Last Friday, the government had announced the scheme for grant of ex-gratia payment of difference between compound interest and simple interest

for six months to borrowers in specified loan accounts.

Loan accounts with sanctioned limits and outstanding not exceeding Rs 2 crore (aggregate of all facilities with all the lending institutions) will be eligible and such accounts should be standard in the books of the lending institutions as on cut off date of February 29, 2020.

The period reckoned for refund shall be from March 1 to August 21, 2020, that is six months period or 184 days, it said.

The ex-gratia relief will be credited to the account of all eligible borrowers without any requirement to apply, it said.

As per the scheme, the lending institutions shall credit the difference between compound interest and simple interest with regard to the eligible borrowers in respective accounts for the said period irrespective of whether the borrower fully or partially availed the moratorium on repayment of loan announced by the RBI on March 27, 2020.

The scheme is also applicable on those who have not availed the moratorium scheme and continued with the repayment of loans. The scheme, which was announced as per the direction of the Supreme Court, is likely to cost the exchequer Rs 6,500 crore.

**THE RESERVE BANK HAD ON TUESDAY ASKED ALL LENDING institutions, including non-banking financial companies, to ensure that the scheme of waiver of interest on interest for loans up to Rs 2 crore for the six-month moratorium period is implemented by November 5, as decided by the government.**

## 18 Per Cent Gujarat Bypoll Candidates Facing Criminal Charges: Report



**NEW DELHI:** Out of the 80 candidates in the fray for the November 3 Gujarat Assembly by-election, 18 per cent have declared criminal cases against themselves, according to a report by poll rights group Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

The report, which also gives details of the financial background of candidates, said a total of 20 or 25 per cent of them have declared financial assets worth crores.

While 81 candidates are contesting the elections, the report is based on an analysis of affidavits furnished by 80 of them.

Seven or 9 per cent of the candidates have declared serious criminal cases against themselves, while 14 or 18 per cent have declared criminal cases against themselves, the ADR report said.

Serious criminal cases are non-bailable offences with over five years of imprisonment.

According to the report, one (50 per cent) out of two candidates analysed from Bhartiya Tribal Party (BTP), three (38 per cent) out of eight candidates analysed from BJP, two (25 per cent) out of eight candidates analysed from Congress and eight (15 per cent) out of 53 Independent candidates have declared criminal cases against themselves in their affidavits.

Two (25 per cent) out of eight constituencies are red alert constituencies, where three or more contesting candidates have declared criminal cases against themselves.

"The directions of the Supreme Court have had no effect on the political parties in selection of candidates as they have

again followed their old practice of giving tickets to around 18 per cent candidates with criminal cases," the report said.

"All major parties contesting the Gujarat by-elections have 25-38 per cent candidates who have declared criminal cases against themselves," it said.

The Supreme Court had in February asked political parties to give reasons for selecting candidates with a criminal background and why other individuals without criminal antecedents could not be selected.

The details of the financial background of the candidates were also given in the report.

"Out of the 80 candidates, 20 (25 per cent) are crorepatis. Eight (100 per cent) of eight candidates analysed from BJP, 6 (75 per cent) out of eight candidates analysed from Congress and 6 (11 per cent) out of 53 Independent candidates have declared assets worth over 1 crore," the report stated.

The average assets per candidate is 1.16 crore, it said.

"Among major parties, the average assets per candidate for eight Congress candidates analysed is 4.38 crore, for eight BJP candidates analysed is 2.52 crores, two BTP candidates have average assets of 17.85 lakhs and 53 Independent candidates have average assets of 70.52 lakhs," it added.

Bypolls in Abdasa, Limbdi, Morbi, Dhari, Gadhada, Karjan, Dang and Kaprada assembly seats in Gujarat were necessitated after the sitting Congress MLAs resigned.

The counting of votes will take place on November 10.

**THE DIRECTIONS OF THE SUPREME Court have had no effect on the political parties in selection of candidates as they have again followed their old practice of giving tickets to around 18 per cent candidates with criminal cases,"**

## Emmanuel Macron's Posters Pasted On Busy Mumbai Road, Cops Remove Them

**MUMBAI:** Posters of French President Emmanuel Macron were found pasted on a busy road in south Mumbai and were later removed by the police, an official said today.

Pedestrians and motorists in the Bhandi Bazaar area spotted hundreds of posters of President Macron, who is facing criticism from Muslim countries over a cartoon row in France, pasted on the Mohammed Ali Road under Jy Jyover on Thursday evening, the official said.

A video also surfaced on social media in which vehicles can be seen driving over the posters.

Mumbai Police spokesperson S Chaitanya confirmed the incident and said the posters were promptly removed by the Pyl-



honie police after getting information about them.

No case has been registered in this regard so far, another official said.

### NEWS MAKER

## Shiv Sena Proposes Urmila Matondkar's Name For A Legislative Council Seat

**U**rmila Matondkar is among the 12 nominees to the Maharashtra Legislative Council supposed to be picked by the Maha Vikas Aghadi government in Maharashtra.

According to media reports, she was nominated by the Shiv Sena through the Governor's quota.

"Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray has spoken to Matondkar and she has agreed to be nominated by the Sena," Indian Express quoted Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut as saying.

Matondkar had contested the 2019 Lok Sabha polls on a Congress ticket from Mumbai North, but had lost



to Gopal Shetty of the BJP. A few months after losing the election, Matondkar had announced that she was resigning from the Congress. "My political and social sensibilities refuse to allow vested interests in the party to use me as a means to fight petty in-house politics instead of working on a bigger goal in Mumbai Con-

gress," she had then said, announcing her decision to part with the party.

On Thursday, the Maharashtra cabinet approved 12 names for nomination to the state Legislative Council from the Governor's quota. "The names of the nominees from the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress were approved by

the cabinet today. These names will be sent to the governor for their appointment as Council members from his quota," news agency PTI quoted sources as saying.

These names will be recommended to Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari.

The term of 12 members of the 78-member upper house of Maharashtra from the governors quota had ended in June this year.

Meanwhile, the NCP is reportedly considering the names of Shivajirao Gajre, Uttamrao Jankar, Eknath Khadse, and Anand Shinde to be nominated to the legislative council.

## Village Chief's Husband In UP's Amethi Burnt Alive, 3 Arrested: Police

**AMETHI:** A village chief's husband in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, was allegedly burnt alive and died on his way to the hospital, with his family claiming that he was killed over electoral rivalry, the police said.

The man's family filed a complaint against five people, of which three have been arrested.

Arjun Kori, 45, husband of Bhadoiya village head Chhotka Devi, was found with serious burns on Thursday night. He died while being taken to a Lucknow hospital for treatment this morning, the police said.

His son Surendra Kumar said Arjun Kori had gone to a market to purchase vegetables on Thursday evening but



did not return home.

Later, he was found with serious burn injuries at a property belonging to one Krishna Kumar Tiwari.

Surendra Kumar said his father had a strong base in the area, which had perturbed his opponents. He has been killed over electoral rivalry, Mr Ku-

mar alleged.

The man's son claimed that his father had taken names of four people, who stuffed a piece of cloth into his mouth and set him on fire after beating him up.

Superintendent of Police Dinesh Singh said the incident was reported on Thursday night and Arjun Kori was admitted to a hospital in Amethi.

He died while he was being taken to a Lucknow hospital on Friday morning, he said.

On the complaint of the family, a case was registered. Three of the accused, including Krishna Kumar Tiwari, have been arrested while search is on to find the remaining two, District Magistrate Arun Kumar and official Dinesh Singh said.

Necessary financial help is being extended to the family, they said.

The police said there are reports that a minor is also among the five named by the family and investigations are on in this connection.