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Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)

No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Higher Red Blood Cell Transfusions Level Might Be Risky For Premature Babies

A randomized clinical trial lead by researchers of George Mason University has examined the blood transfusions in premature babies and their long term impacts.

The study appears in 'The New England Journal of Medicine' and is the largest study to-date to compare thresholds for blood transfusions in premature infants.

Very low birth weight infants are at high risk for anaemia and often need blood transfusions to survive. Some doctors use a higher level and some use a lower level of red blood cells to order a transfusion. A National Institutes of Health-funded study suggests that providing a higher threshold



of red cells within clinically accepted limits (i.e., using a higher level of red blood cells when ordering a transfusion) offers no advantage in survival or reduction in neurological impairment over a lower threshold.

Very preterm infants (born before 29 weeks of pregnancy) and those

weighing less than 1,000 grams (slightly more than 2 pounds) are at high risk for anaemia because of their early stage of development, reduced ability to produce red blood cells, and need for blood sampling as part of their intensive medical care.

Previous studies suggest that anaemic infants

who received transfusions at a higher haemoglobin threshold within the currently accepted range would have a lower risk of death or developmental problems. Measuring haemoglobin, a protein produced in red blood cells, indicates the proportion of red blood cells. Haemoglobin transfusion thresholds for preterm infants vary according to weight, stage of maturity and other factors.

Of 845 infants assigned to a higher haemoglobin threshold, 50.1% died or survived with neurodevelopmental impairment, compared to 49.8% of 847 infants assigned to a lower threshold. When the two-component outcomes were evaluated separately, the two groups also had similar rates of

death (16.2% vs. 15%) and of neurodevelopmental impairment (39.6% vs 40.3%).

The authors evaluated the babies at two years of age and conclude that a higher haemoglobin threshold increased the number of transfusions, but did not improve the chance of survival without neurodevelopmental impairment.

"The findings are likely to be used to guide transfusion practice in the future for these infants; studies in premature infants are needed to guide care for these small and vulnerable infants; studies funded by NIH in multi-site networks are vitally important to the health of these fragile babies," explains Higgins.

Agencies

Adobe Flash Player Is Now History, Top Browsers End Support



Software major Adobe has bid goodbye to its iconic Flash Player as major internet browsers shut it down on Friday and Microsoft blocked it in most versions of Windows.

Adobe had earlier said to stop supporting Flash on December 31 and block Flash content from running on January 12.

First announced in July 2017, Adobe had said to stop updating and distributing Flash Player after December 31, 2020 due to the diminished usage of the technology and the availability of better, more secure options such as HTML5, WebGL and WebAssembly.

Microsoft has announced to end support for Adobe Flash Player on Microsoft Edge and Internet Explorer 11 at the end of the year.

Some enterprise customers may still require

Flash Player commercial support and licensing beyond 2020 to run internal business systems.

According to media reports, the Internet Archive is preserving Flash games and animations, including hits like "Peanut Butter Jelly Time."

"We want to take a moment to thank all of our customers and developers who have used and created amazing Flash Player content over the last two decades," Adobe said in an update last month.

"We are proud that Flash had a crucial role in evolving web content across animation, interactivity, audio, and video. We are excited to help lead the next era of digital experiences".

Adobe had recommended all users to immediately uninstall Flash Player to help protect their systems.

Agencies

Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir

NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Haji Ghulam Mohammad Ganie S/o: Abdul Rehman Ganie R/o: Hafroo Batapora Chadoora Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04C-0580 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Hafroo Batpora..

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer ARTO Budgam within a period of 07 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.2071
Dated 31-12-2020

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education,

BRANCH OFFICE SOPORE

The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the original marks certificate of 10TH & 12th under Below mentioned particulars

Name: Ishfaq Ahmad Mir
Fathers Name: Gh Nabi Mir
Mothers Name: Haseena Bagum

Roll No (10TH) 390562 Session /Year Annual 2009
(12TH) 318520 Session /Year Bi-Annual 2012

Now the candidate has applied for Duplicate Marks Card. Anybody (if) having any objection may file the same before undersigned with (07) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides, the original marks card is treated as cancelled.

Dated: 01/01/2021

AMS

Sd/ Assistant Secretary
Branch Office Sopore

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, BUDGAM

(CONVENER DISTRICT HEALTH SOCIETY)

ADVERTISEMENT NOTIFICATION

Applications on prescribed formats are invited on behalf of District Health Society, Budgam from the eligible candidates who are permanent residents of District Budgam (viz area of operation of District Health Society, Budgam) for Hiring/contractual engagement against the below mentioned posts under National Health Mission (NHM), Budgam.

S.No	Category	No. Of Posts	Vacancy at District	Requisite Qualification	Selection Criteria
01	Nursing/Sister Tutor	02	ANMT School Budgam	B.Sc Nursing One Year Teaching Experience. Age:- up to 65 years	(i) B.Sc Nursing = 80 points. (ii) Viva Voce = 20 points Note:- Item (i) on prorata basis.

Terms and Conditions :

- The applicant must be a permanent resident of J&K, hailing from District Budgam (Medically).
- The expression "Block Level" wherever used in this advertisement notification would mean "Medical Block" and not the "C.D Block" certified by concerned Block Medical Officers.
- Applications can be rejected by the screening committee if found not falling as per required criteria.
- Contract will be offered by District Health Society, Budgam and not by the J&K Government.
- The initial contract will be for a period upto 31-03-2021, extendable subject to performance review of the selected candidates, budgetary provisions in the next financial year and continuation of Scheme.
- The selected candidates shall be paid monthly honorarium under National Health Mission, as communicated by State Health Society J&K and contractual hiring shall not be entitled to any other allowances or monetary benefits whatsoever.
- A contractual appointee shall have to execute an agreement/bond with District Health Society Budgam.
- The contractual appointee shall be required to work at the place against the post to which he/she is appointed and shall not be eligible for transfer from the place of posting.
- Only recognised degrees shall be considered for eligibility.
- Applications not falling in the prescribed criteria or without aforesaid documents shall be rejected out rightly.
- The candidature of the appointed candidates shall be cancelled, in case it is found at any stage that he or she has concealed any fact or submitted fraudulent certificates or misrepresented the facts to avail the candidature.
- Number of posts may increase or decrease depending upon the sanction/approval from the State Health Society, NHM, J&K or any vacancy which may arise during the process of selection.
- All the applicants shall get latest status of Residence proof from concerned Tehsildars with the application form.

Interested candidates from the District Budgam can only apply by sending their applications on the prescribed format, which can be had from the Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Budgam. The duly filled in application form along with one recent passport size photograph (attested), should reach in the Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Budgam by or before 15-01-2021 upto 4:00 P.M. and shall not be responsible for any postal delays and applications received after last date shall not be entertained.

The list of documents (self-attested) to be attached with the application form are mentioned below:-

- Date of Birth Certificate.
- B.Sc Nursing Marks Cards/Certificate.
- Domicile certificate.
- One Year valid teaching experience from recognized institute.

No:- CMOB/NHM/20-21/

Dated: -12-2020

DIPK-11148/20

Chief Medical Officer
(Vice Chairman DHS)
Budgam



UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division

E-TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of the University of Kashmir e-tenders for Cleaning and Sterilization of Drinking Water Storage Tanks (In Single Cover System) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Unit Holders Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises registered with Govt. of J&K/ other union territories and CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following segments:-

S. No:	Name of the work	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Cost of tender document (In Rs.)	Bid Submission Date	Time and date of opening of tender
	Scientific Cleaning and Sterilization of Drinking Water Storage Tanks (Underground Sumps, PVC and RCC Overhead Storage Tanks) using Six Stage Tan clean Methodology at Various Assets (Residential / Academic Buildings) of all campuses up to ending March 2022.	Rs. 20,000/-	Rs.600/-	02-01-2021 To 11-01-2021 (6:00PM)	12-01-2021 (11.00AM)

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the web site www.kashmiruniversity.net / www.jktenders.gov.in.

Executive Engineer

No: F (UCD) (E.Tend.)(Cleaning Water Tanks)KU/35/20
Dated:-01-01-2021

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

J&K SERVICES SELECTION BOARD

Hema Complex, Sector-03, Channi Himmat, Jammu
(www.jkssb.nic.in)

Subject: Revised Syllabus for the post of Accounts Assistant (Finance).

NOTICE

Whereas, the J&K Services Selection Board advertised posts of various categories vide Advertisement Notification No. 04 of 2020 dated: 16.12.2020, and;

Whereas, the Board notified Syllabi for various posts advertised vide aforesaid advertisement notification including the post of Accounts Assistant (Finance) vide Notice No. SSB/Secy/Sel/2020/5141-44 Dated 24.12.2020, and;

Whereas, the Board decided to update the syllabus with respect to contents and distribution of marks for the post of Accounts Assistant (Finance) notified vide aforesaid notice.

Now, therefore, revised syllabus for the post of Accounts Assistant (Finance) advertised vide Advertisement Notification No. 04 of 2020 dated: 16.12.2020 under item No. 106 is notified afresh as per the details given in the Annexure to this notice.

This notice is for the purpose of intimation to the concerned candidates only.

Sd/-
(Sachin Jamwal) KAS,
Secretary
J&K Services Selection Board
Jammu

DIPK-11145/20

No. SSB/Secy/Sel/2020/5220-24
Dated: 30.12.2020

ANNEXURE

Subject: Syllabus for Written test (Objective Type) for the post of Accounts Assistant (Finance).

Marks: 120

Time: 02:00 Hours

General Knowledge with special reference to J&K UT

20 Marks

- Popular names of personalities (Religion, Politics, Scientific discoveries, Geographical, Sports, History)
- Centrally Sponsored Schemes- Guidelines and objectives.
- Climate and crops in J&K and India.
- Current events of Local, National and International importance.
- Weather, Climate, Crops, Means of Transport.
- J&K History, Economy and Culture
- Flora and Fauna of J&K
- Rivers and Lakes.
- Important Tourist Destinations.
- J&K Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 (as amended upto December, 2020), 73rd & 74th Constitutional amendments.
- J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019

Statistics

15 Marks

- Primary and secondary data.
- Tabulation and compilation of Data
- Measures of central Tendency
- Theory of Probability
- Correlation and regression- Concept and simple applications.
- Theory of Attributes- Basic concepts and their applications.
- Theory of Index Numbers: Tests of Index numbers- Wholesale and consumer price Index numbers.
- Demography-Census, its features and functions.
- Vital Statistics- Measures of fertility, Crude fertility rates, specific fertility rates, gross and net reproduction rates., Measures of Mortality

General Economics

15 Marks

- Introduction of Economics- Basic concept and Principles.
- Fiscal & Monetary Policy- Meaning, Scope and Methodology.
- Theory of consumers demand using Indifference curve technique.
- Demand Analysis
- Factor Pricing -Marginal productivity Theory & Ricardian Theory of Rent
- Pricing under various forms of Market.
- Factors of production & Laws of Production.
- Concept of Economic Growth and its measurement
- Characteristics and problems of developing economy
- Planning vs Market Economy.
- Economic Reforms in India
- Concepts of National Income.
- Inflation- Meaning, Types, Effects.

Mathematics

15 Marks

- Set Theory - Basic Concepts & Applications.
- Matrices & Determinants, Simultaneous Linear Equations- Cramer's Rule.
- Analytical Geometry.
- Differentiation- Basic Concepts (Addition, Product & Chain rule)
- Optimization using Differential techniques.
- Integration-Reduction & Substitution Method.
- Linear Differential Equations.
- Differential Equations Existence theorem for the solution of $dy/dx = f(x,y)$

Knowledge of Computers

15 Marks

- Introduction and Objectives.
- Basic Applications of Computer and its component.
- Fundamentals of computer sciences.
- Hardware & Software, Concept of Open Source Technologies.
- Input & output Devices.
- Knowledge of MS Word, MS Excel, MS Access, MS Powerpoint, PDF Internet and E-mail.
- Concept of Computer Virus and Anti-Virus.
- Terms and Abbreviation used in IT.

Accountancy and Book Keeping

15 Marks

- Introduction to Financial Accounting and its terms.
- Accounting equation and Journal.
- Voucher Approach in Accounting.
- Bank reconciliation Statement.
- Financial Management/Statements.
- Partnership Accounts.
- Ledger Accounts.
- Cash Book, Financial Audit.
- Elements of Double entry Book Keeping.
- Rules for journalizing.
- Trial Balance.
- Trading Account.
- Profit Loss Account and Balance Sheet.
- Concept of Social Accounting, Social Audit and cash based single entry system of accounting.
- Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

General Science

15 Marks

- Various sources of energy; conventional sources of energy; improvement in technology for using conventional source of energy (Biomass and wind energy)
- Non-conventional sources of energy (Solar energy, Tidal energy).
- Mechanics, Rest, motion, Velocities, acceleration, Newton Laws of motion, Voltage, Current, Resistance, Power, D.C. Batteries
- Waves, light as a wave, Sound waves, Transverse and longitudinal waves.
- Structure of Atom
- Solids, Liquids and Gases (Basics)
- Life processes: Nutrition and its types, Respiration, Transportation of water, food and minerals in plants.
- Vitamins- Diseases related to vitamin deficiency.
- Environmental pollution.
- Ecosystem - Its components, Food chains and Food webs.
- Ozone layer, its depletion, Green House Effect.

Mental Ability & Reasoning

10 Marks

- Number series.
- Letter series.
- Coding decoding.
- Direction sense.
- Blood relations.
- Mathematical reasoning.
- Speed, Distance and Time.
- Statements and conclusions.
- Logical Reasoning.
- Mental Reasoning.

Govt Extends 'Disability Compensation' For All Serving Employees

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Government has decided to extend "Disability Compensation" for all serving employees, if they get disabled in the line of duty while performing their service and are retained in service in-spite of such disablement, stated an official release. This was informed by Union Minister of State, PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space Jitendra Singh.

The fresh order will particularly provide a huge relief to young Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel like CRPF, BSF, CISF, etc since disability in performance of duties is generally reported in their case due to constraints of job requirement as well as hostile or difficult work - environment.

Pertinent to mention that this new order will remove an anomaly in service rules, con-



Image for representation

sidering the hardship faced by the employees, since as per the earlier OM dated 5/5/2009, the provisions of disability benefits under Central Civil Services(CCS) (EOP) Rules did not provide such compensation to those government servants who were appointed on or af-

ter 1.1.2004 and covered under National Pension System (NPS). However, with the new order issued by the Department of Pensions in the Ministry of Personnel, the employees covered under NPS will also get benefits under Rule (9) of Extra Ordinary Pension (EOP).

In other words, if a government servant gets disabled while performing his duties and this disablement is attributed to government service, in that case if he is still retained in the service in spite of disablement, a lump sum compensation will be paid to him by arriving at the capitalized value of the disability element, with reference to the Commutation Table in force from time to time.

Expressing his satisfaction on today's order, Dr. Jitendra Singh said, the Modi Government is making all efforts to simplify the rules and to do away with discriminatory clauses. The ultimate objective of all these new initiatives is to provide ease of living for the Government servants even after they have superannuated and become pensioners or family pensioners or elder citizens, he said.

In another employee-friendly

decision, the Ministry of Personnel recently did away with minimum qualifying service of 10 years for pension, if a government servant is incapacitated due to bodily or medical infirmity and retired from government service. Accordingly, Rule 38 of CCS (Pension) Rules was amended to provide Invalid Pension at 50% of the last pay, even if the employee had not completed minimum qualifying service of 10 years.

In addition to above, in yet another reform in the Pension Rules, a decision was also taken to amend the rule and provide pension at enhanced rate to the family of an employee who died during service before completing the requisite service of minimum 7 years. As a result, now the family pension of 50% of the last pay is also admissible to the family of employees who die even before completing 7 years of service.

JK Bank Online Banking Associate Test Begins

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The online test for the recruitment of Banking Associates in Jammu and Kashmir Bank began today at 30 centres established across UT of J&K.

More than 1.40 lac aspirants have applied for the recruitment of 1500 Banking Associate posts advertised by the Bank. The test - for the recruitment of the clerical staff will be conducted in nine phases across UT of J&K and in the rest of the country - will conclude on January 31, 2021.

Notably, the exams, held through online mode, are being conducted by the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS), Mumbai- sponsored by Indian Banks Association, an umbrella organisation of 227 member banks- with technical expertise being facilitated by the Tata Consultancy Ser-

vices (TCS). The role of the J&K Bank is solely observatory in nature to ensure smooth conduct of the examinations.

The team of senior J&K Bank officials led by Executive President (EP) Sunil Gupta including President Chetan Paljore, Special Secretary to CMD Karanjit Singh visited many examination centres to take stock of the arrangements.

The Executive President expressed satisfaction with the overall arrangement at the centres.

"As already asserted, these examinations are being conducted by IBPS with TCS providing them technical expertise. These examinations are conducted in a fair and transparent manner. J&K Bank is making sure that candidates are provided with proper facilities to take part in the examinations without any problems and I am happy with the way arrangements have been done at the

centres for the comfort of the aspirants," the EP said. The enthusiasm and eagerness to join the J&K Bank, he said, was heartening to see.

"It is a great opportunity for our educated youth to join J&K Bank as 1500 posts have been advertised. It gives us pleasure to see the young generation eager to be part of J&K Bank which strongly indicates their deep emotional connect with the institution," he said.

The aspirants expressed their satisfaction to the visiting team with regard to the arrangements and termed the bank as the main source of employment in the private sector.

"A job in J&K Bank is considered quite secure and financially sound in the society so I want to be part of J&K Bank. The facilities, especially heating arrangements, at the examination centre were really good," said Afaq Ahmad, an aspirant from Anantnag.

SKUAST-K Reviews Progress Of World Bank-Funded IDP Project



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Kashmir Friday held an appraisal meeting to review the progress of the World Bank-ICAR funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) awarded to the university in 2019 for its institutional development.

The three-year project is aimed to develop SKUAST-K as a model agricultural higher education institution and build next-generation human capital to drive the knowledge-based and technology-driven agri-economy of Jammu and Kashmir and the country. With the help of the NAHEP, SKUAST-K aims to become a preferred destination of agri-education for creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, besides the hardcore research and extension.

Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof Mushtaq Ahmad, who chaired the meeting, said the university under the NAHEP has a particular focus on the skill-building of the students so that they become job-ready.

The vice-chancellor also said that SKUAST-K under NAHEP is soon coming up with an incubation and innovation centre, which will lead the students of the university to become innovators and entrepreneurs and help them to launch their own agri-startups.

The vice-chancellor also released 'Agriculture' the bimonthly NAHEP-IDP newsletter of SKUAST-K, which covers various activities and achievements carried under the programme.

Director Planning and Monitoring and PI NAHEP, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, who gave a detailed overview of the project, said the Institutional Development Plan (IDP) of SKUAST-K seeks to link education with employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership, besides building resilient and environmentally sustainable infrastructure.

He said SKUAST-K is also helping the Higher Education Department in the initiation of more than 30 agriculture-related skill development courses for teaching in the various colleges of the UT.

SKUAST-K is collaborating with various institutions within the country and outside to provide students better research opportunities and exposure, he said, adding it is also fostering industry linkages to develop market-oriented human resources for facing the challenges of 21 century.

Director Education and Dean Faculty of Fisheries, Prof MH Balkhi while emphasising the role of the agricultural universities in terms of the present-day demands said it is not only the degree, which the students should take from the university but also knowledge and security of livelihood.

APHC Anguished At Lawaypora Killings



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq has expressed deep sorrow and anguish at the killing of three youth Zubair, Ajaz and Athar by the forces at Lawaypora.

The families of the youth who protested the killing outside the Police Control Room (PCR) Srinagar, allege that the three were innocent youth who had left their homes for matters related to their education.

The grandfather of slain Ajaz said to the media that he had tea with his grandson that morning and alleged that Ajaz was dragged out of the car on his way to Srinagar and shot dead.

APHC said that such

gruesome killings are heart wrenching. What is worst is that even the dead bodies of these boys were not given to their families for last rites.

"These dubious encounters mostly involving the youth, routinely take place in J&K as there is no accountability for such killings", Hurriyat said in a press statement.

Thousands of Kashmiri youth have been killed since decades as a result of the lingering Kashmir conflict

APHC said that such incidents warrant a fair and impartial probe as the families of the slain youth are demanding to get to the truth but in Kashmir "this basic right to justice and redressal is a distant dream".

Why Parents Of Slain Youth Were Not Called To Encounter Site: Shah Agencies

SRINAGAR: Raising questions over the Srinagar encounter, senior Vice President Awami National Conference, Muzaffar Shah Friday asked why SOP was not followed by joint forces and why the family members of the slain youth were not called at the encounter site.

Shah said that forces are bound to follow SOP's under which family members of trapped militants are called near the encounter site to persuade their loved ones to give up arms. "In Srinagar no such SOP was followed", he said.

"Families of youth have already termed this encounter as 'staged and fake'. We have seen earlier how three innocent labourers from Rajouri were killed in a Amshipora Shopian fake encounter," Shah said.

He sought time bound inquiry into the circumstances leading to the killing of these three youth saying the justice must be immediately delivered by investigating the matter on an impartial, fast track basis.

"It is for the government now to clear the ambiguity leading to the death of the three persons," he said.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir MECHANICAL HOSPITAL & CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR

(Phone No: 0194-2496089, E-mail id: xenmhchdk@yahoo.in) Website: www.medkmr.org

NIT No: MHCHD/TS/2020-21/237
Dated: 31.12.2020
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Date of sale of tender documents.	From 01.01.2021 to 11.01.2021 (2.00 P.M)
Last date of receipt of Tenders.	12.01.2021 upto 2PM.

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir , sealed tenders affixed with Rs.5/- revenue stamps are invited from the registered firms/Govt. Contractors for the below mentioned work:

S.No	Description of work.	Estimated cost in Rupees	Amount of Earnest Money, in Rs.	Cost of Tender document in Rs.	Time of completion	AA NO.	TS No.
1	Site Cleaning and dismantling of existing civil structure of old 75 KVA DG Set House along with allied works for Installation of 630 KVA H.T Transformer at Govt. B&J Hospital, Srinagar.	63500/-	1300/-	200/-	05 Days	49 MCS of 2020, Dated: 28-08-2020 of PMC, Sgr	83 of 12/2020 (AEE 2 nd)

The tender must be accompanied with the requisite earnest money deposit in the shape of CDR/FDR drawn from any scheduled/ national bank and pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, MH&CH Division, Srinagar. The tenders found without earnest money shall be rejected out rightly at the time of opening of tender.

The tender document can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours against cost mentioned above, in the form of IPO/Demand Draft or Cash Payment. Tender documents shall be issued subject to production of certificates to the following effect:

1. Latest Sales tax clearance certificate/ or as applicable as per new GST rules.
2. J&K State Sales Tax Registration Certificate/ GST registration certificate.
3. Documentary proof of similar nature of work in any Govt./Semi-Govt. Department.

The tenders should reach the office of undersigned on 12.01.2021 upto 2 P.M and shall be opened on the same day or any subsequent date convenient to the undersigned in presence of the tenderers who may be present on the spot. The envelope containing tender should properly be superscripted with Tender Notice no, Name of work and Name of tenderer.

DIPK-11180/20

NO: - MHCHD/TS/8240-46

Dated: 31-12-2020

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Mechanical Hospital & Central Heating Division, Srinagar.

DIAL-EMMA



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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS



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

This Day in History

- 69 - Roman Lower Rhine army proclaims its commander, Vitellius, Emperor
- 533 - John II begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1235 - Emperor Joseph II orders Jews of Galicia Austria to adopt family names Spain
- 1492 - Muhammad XII, the last Emir of Granada, surrenders his city to Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabel I of Castile, ending both the Reconquista and centuries of Muslim rule in the Iberian peninsula
- 1570 Tsar Ivan the Terrible's march to Novgorod begins
- 1585 - Spain & Catholic France sign Saint League of Joinville
- 1602 - Spanish force in Ireland surrender to the English army at Kinsdale
- 1757 - British troops occupy Calcutta India
- 1776 - Austria ends interrogation torture
- 1883 - Battle of Boschberg takes place in South Africa as part of the Mapoch War
- 1905 - Elara, a satellite of Jupiter, discovered by Charles Dillon Perrine in San Jose, California
- 1905 - Japanese troops capture Port Arthur from Russia, a blow to national morale and causing further discontent within Russia
- 1905 - American anarcho-syndicalist union known as the Industrial Workers of the World forms Invention
- 1913 - Mahatma Gandhi leaves the Tolstoy Farm in Transvaal, South Africa
- 1919 - Lithuania gains independence
- 1941 - World War II: German bombing severely damages the Llandaff Cathedral in Cardiff, Wales
- 1942 - World War II: the 28 nations at war with Axis powers pledge to make no separate peace deals
- 1960 - John Reynolds sets age of solar system at 4,950,000,000 years
- 1979 - Gavaskar gets twin tons for India for the third time (v WI)
- 1984 - Riot in Tunis kills over 100
- 1984 - Major-General Muhammadu Buhari is declared Head of State in Nigeria, following a military coup
- 1985 - Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak reappoints Coptic pope Shenuda III
- 1992 - Test debut of Shane Warne, v India at Sydney
- 1994 - Battles between army & rebellious indians in South Mexico, kill 57
- 1995 - Most distant galaxy yet discovered found by scientists using Keck telescope in Hawaii (est 15 billion light years away)
- 1999 - A brutal snowstorm smashes into the Midwestern United States, causing 14 inches (359 mm) of snow in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and 19 inches (487 mm) in Chicago, where temperatures plunge to -13°F (-25°C); 68 deaths are reported.
- 2004 - Stardust successfully flies past Comet Wild 2, collecting samples that it will return to Earth two years later
- 2014 - 30 people are killed after a bus plunges off a cliff and falls 400 ft in Malshej Ghat, India
- 2014 - Raul Castro gives a speech commemorating the 55th anniversary of the Cuban revolution and warns of "neo-liberal and neo-colonial thinking" entering the country
- 2015 - The Economist lists Daniel Kahneman as the 7th most influential economist in the world
- 2016 - Saudi Arabia executes 47 persons, including Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr
- 2017 - US House Republicans vote to gut the independent Office of Congressional Ethics, a public uproar forces them to back down the next day

From KO Archives

Law Variation Holds Up Qureshi's Transfer

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI - Non-applicability of Indian laws in Jammu and Kashmir today proved to be a major handicap for Delhi High Court in deciding the issue of handing over JKLF activist Hashim Qureshi, an accused in the hijacking of Indian Airlines plane in 1971, to Srinagar police as neither his nor government counsel could place the exact legal position before it.

The court, while adjourning the matter to January 2, further extended the stay of a city courts order yesterday permitting the Jammu and Kashmir police to take his custody till Tuesday.

A special division bench constituted to hear the petition of Qureshi, challenging his detention by Delhi police after his arrival here from Copenhagen and remanding him to the custody of Jammu and Kashmir police adjourned hearing to January two with the instruction that all relevant laws and supreme court judgements referred to by the counsel from both sides should be placed before it by tomorrow evening

While Qureshi's counsel K.T.S.Tulsi challenged his client's detention and custody to Jammu and Kashmir police on the grounds that he had already been convicted for the offence by a Pakistani court and served nine years of imprisonment there, the Delhi police and Jammu and Kashmir government counsel said he was only tried for the offence of wrongful confinement of passengers in Pakistan not for hijacking, kidnapping and robbery, mentioned in the FIR by the state police.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 02 January, 2001)

جناب شہید قاسم سیلانی کی برسی کے موقع پر جموں و کشمیر اتحاد المسلمین یونٹ مالوہ کا خراج تحسین۔

شہید قاسم سیلانی کی جو عمر دی اور اس مقامت ہمیشہ امریکہ اور دیگر استعماری قوتوں کی
آنکھ کا کانٹا ثابت ہوتی رہی ہیں۔ یونٹ صدر السید الحسین الرحمنی



جناب شہید قاسم سیلانی کی برسی کے موقع پر جموں و کشمیر اتحاد المسلمین یونٹ مالوہ کا خراج تحسین۔
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World Ushers In New Year Under The Shadow Of Covid-19

AGENCIES

From Sydney to Rome, firework displays, pyre burnings and live performances will be watched online or on television — if they have not been cancelled altogether.

The world ushered in the New Year with pandemic controls muting celebrations for billions of people eager to bid farewell to a virus-ridden 2020.

After a grinding year that has seen at least 1.7 million people die from Covid-19, fresh waves of infection have sparked renewed lockdowns and forced would-be revellers to extend their 2020 tradition of watching events from the sofa.

The eagerly awaited first seconds of 2021 fell on the Pacific nations of Kiribati and Samoa from 1000 GMT, with the uninhabited Howland and Baker Islands the last to tip over into the New Year, 26 hours later.

New Zealand, which has won plaudits for its handling of the coronavirus, followed an hour later with large crowds gathered in Auckland to watch a fireworks display.

Although still isolated by international border closures, months of zero recorded cases in the community has let life in New Zealand return to relative normality.

In Australia's largest city, Sydney, fireworks lit up the glittering harbour with a dazzling display at 1300 GMT, but few spectators watched in person.

Plans to allow crowds were scrapped amid a cluster of around 150 new infections that have seen travel to and from

Fireworks explode over the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge as New Year celebrations begin in Sydney on January 1, 2021. One million people would usually crowd the Sydney Harbour



Sydney severely restricted.

"I think everybody is looking towards 2021 as a fresh beginning and a fresh start," Karen Roberts, among the lucky few who were allowed past checkpoints around the area, told AFP at a bar nestled under the Sydney Opera House.

CURFEWS BEING ENFORCED

In Hong Kong, despite restrictions, some ventured out to mark the start of 2021, gathering next to the Victoria Harbour water front to take selfies.

In Tokyo, where residents face the prospect of a state of emergency being imposed after a daily record 1,300 new coronavirus infections were recorded in the last 24 hours, people queued in face masks and face guards to offer New Year prayers.

Wuhan in China where the virus first appeared late last year, saw thousands gather to celebrate the New Year and Taipei also enjoyed a more traditionally upbeat celebration with crowds massing to watch fireworks.

Elsewhere, the mood was far more downbeat.

In Russia, President Vladimir Putin acknowledged in a New Year's address that a second wave of infections was battering the nation.

"Unfortunately the epidemic has not yet been completely stopped. The fight against it does not stop for a minute," he said. Italy -- where shocking images of makeshift morgues and exhausted medics awoke the world to the severity of

the crisis -- is on a nationwide lockdown until January 7 and a 10 pm curfew is in place.

From France to Latvia to Brazil, police and -- in some cases -- military personnel are being deployed to make sure night-time curfews or bans on large gatherings are enforced.

In hard-hit London, 74-year-old American singer-songwriter Patti Smith had been due to ring in the New Year with a tribute to National Health Service workers who have died from Covid-19, projected on the screen at Piccadilly Circus and streamed on YouTube.

Due to alarm at rising infections rates, however, the big screen projection was cancelled with the tribute viewable instead solely online.

SOCIAL GATHERING

A fireworks and a laser show was held in Dubai at the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest tower, where there have been a slew of new cases. All those watching the event live -- whether at a public place, hotel or restaurant -- were required to wear masks and register with identifying QR barcodes.

In Beirut, a city still reeling from the August 4 port explosion, authorities are also cutting loose. A night curfew has been pushed back to 3 am. Bars, restaurants and night clubs have all reopened and are advertising large parties to mark the turn of the year.

On the banks of Lake Baikal in Siberia, where temperatures plummet to as low as -35 degrees celsius (-31 Fahrenheit), around a dozen Russians emerged invigorated after a new year's eve ice dip.

The swimmers, known in Russia as "walrus", ran several kilometers (miles) through a snowy forest in swimsuits and festive costumes before plunging into the world's largest freshwater lake.

"It's invigorating. It stings a little!" Andrei Bugai told AFP after climbing out of the water.

"It'll make you feel 10 years young-

more than 193,000 Covid-19 deaths, the second-largest number in the world -- fearful medics await a new wave.

In recent days, social media has been filled with videos showing mask-less revellers enjoying a night out and television channels have even shown live images of police closing bars full of customers.



In this photo provided by the North Korean government, fireworks illuminate the night sky, marking the New Year, as crowds of people look on, at Kim Il Sung Square in Pyongyang, North Korea, early Friday.

er," said Ksenia Novoseltseva, another swimmer, with a wide grin on her face. Chancellor Angela Merkel on Thursday used her New Year greeting to warn Germans the "historic" coronavirus crisis will extend into 2021 even if vaccines bring some hope.

In Brazil -- which has already recorded

"The pandemic peak was between May and July, which was when there wasn't a lot of movement and we looked after ourselves more. Now there are many cases and people are acting as if there wasn't a pandemic," said Luiz Gustavo de Almeida, a microbiologist at the University of Sao Paulo.

Iran Says Top General Qasem Soleimani Killers "Not Safe On Earth"

Ebrahim Raisi, speaking at an event in Tehran to pay tribute to Soleimani, said not even US President Donald Trump, who ordered the strike, was "immune from justice"

AGENCIES

TEHRAN, IRAN: Iran's judiciary chief warned Friday that Qasem Soleimani's killers will "not be safe on Earth", as the Islamic republic began marking the first anniversary of the top general's assassination in a US strike. Ebrahim Raisi, speaking at an event in Tehran to pay tribute to Soleimani, said not even US President Donald Trump, who ordered the strike, was "immune from justice".

Soleimani was killed in a US drone strike at Baghdad airport on January 3, ratcheting up tensions between decades-old arch foes the United States and Iran.

"They will witness a severe revenge. What has come so far has only been glimpses" of it, Raisi told the gathering at Tehran University.

"Do not presume that someone, as the president of America, who appeared as a murderer or ordered a murder, may be immune from justice being carried out. Never," he said. "Those who had a role in this in this assassination and crime will not be safe on Earth."

The event was attended by Iranian officials, and speakers included



representatives from allied regional countries and forces, namely Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen.

A separate event is expected to be held in the coming days in Kerman, Soleimani's hometown where he is buried.

Soleimani headed the Quds force, the foreign operations arm of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Do not presume that someone, as the president of America, who appeared as a murderer or ordered a murder, may be immune from justice being carried out. Never," he said. "Those who had a role in this in this assassination and crime will not be safe on Earth"

Iran, Turkey, Pakistan Plan To Revive Railway Line: Report

AGENCIES

Iran, Turkey and Pakistan plan to revive a railway line connecting Istanbul to Tehran and Islamabad and ultimately extend it to China, Tokyo-based newsmagazine Nikkei Asia reports.

The three countries launched a container train service in 2009, but it only got as far as test runs and was never fully operational.

Even so, they always planned to follow up the initial freight trains with passenger services and are now willing to launch the ITI transnation-

Xinjiang autonomous region which is populated by ethnically Turkic Uighur Muslims, Nikkei said.

According to Lukasz Przybyszewski, a West Asia analyst for the Asia Research Center at Warsaw's War Studies Academy, the ITI railroad would further boost BRI, a trillion-dollar plan to connect the infrastructure and economies of countries across Asia, Africa and Europe.

Przybyszewski believes that Beijing regards Iranian transport infrastructure in particular as part of BRI. The ITI railroad, he says, will help Iran move around US sanc-

1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

Under President Donald Trump, the United States has been following a policy of "maximum pressure" against Iran in order to isolate the country through severing all modes of international trade with the Islamic Republic.

However, Przybyszewski believes it is "practically impossible to isolate and stop Iran from trading with its neighbors".

According to the expert, infrastructure projects such as the ITI railroad will stimulate the Iranian economy, and new railway con-



al line with the aim of enhancing connectivity with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the report said.

The railroad service, stretching for 6,540 km, will cut the 21-day journey between Pakistan and Turkey by sea to 10 days. And by extension, it will connect to China's

tions. "For Tehran, this is an attractive alternative trade route because the ECO countries trade, in local currencies," Przybyszewski told the publication. ECO stands for the Economic Cooperation Organization, a 10-member political and economic intergovernmental organization founded in

nections will offer greater flexibility going forward. Last year, China took a major step to upset the United States in its efforts to isolate Iran economically by committing to several hundred billions of dollars in investment in the Islamic Republic.

WHO Grants Emergency Validation To Pfizer-BioNTech Vaccine

AGENCIES

WHO said its emergency use listing opens the way for regulators in different countries to approve the import and distribution of the vaccine

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday granted emergency validation to the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, paving the way for countries worldwide to quickly approve its import and distribution.

Britain launched its inoculation drive with the US-German vaccine on December 8, with the United States, Canada, and EU countries following suit. WHO said the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine was the first to receive its "emergency validation" since the novel coronavirus first broke out in China a year ago.

"This is a very positive step towards ensuring global access to COVID-19 vaccines," said Mariangela Simao, a top WHO official tasked with ensuring access to medicines.

"But I want to emphasise the need for an even greater global effort to achieve enough vaccine supply to meet the needs of priority populations everywhere," she said in a statement. WHO said its emergency use listing opens the way for regulators in different countries to

approve the import and distribution of the vaccine. It said it also enables Unicef, which plays a key logistical role in distributing anti-Covid vaccines, and the Pan-American Health



Organization to procure the vaccine for countries that need it.

WHO convened its own experts and those from around the world to review

the data on the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine's "safety, efficacy and quality," weighing the benefits against the risks.

"The review found that the vaccine met the must-have criteria for safety

and efficacy set out by WHO, and that the benefits of using the vaccine to address COVID-19 offset potential risks," it said.

Provincial Govt To Pay For Pakistan Hindu Temple Destroyed By Mob

AGENCIES

A Hindu temple in Pakistan destroyed by a Muslim mob last week will be rebuilt using provincial government funds, its information minister said Friday.

Around 1,500 people descended on the temple -- in a remote village of northeast Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province -- after protesting against renovations being made to an adjoining building owned by a Hindu group.

They used sledgehammers to knock down walls before setting the building ablaze.

"We regret the damage caused by the attack," said Kamran Bangash, the provincial information minister.

"The chief minister has ordered the reconstruction of the temple and adjoining house," he told AFP.

Construction will start as soon as possible with the support of the Hindu community, he said, adding security would be provided at the site.

Pakistan's top court has ordered authorities to submit a report on the temple's destruction.

Discrimination and violence against religious minorities are common in Pakistan, where Muslims make up 97% of the population and Hindus around two percent. The

temple, which was destroyed in similar circumstances in 1997 and then rebuilt, is located some 160 kilometres southeast of Peshawar, the provincial capital.



While no Hindus live in the area, devotees often visit the temple and its shrine to pay homage to the Hindu saint Shri Paramhans, who died there before the 1947 partition of India that gave birth to Pakistan.

District police chief Irfanullah Khan told AFP around 45 people had

been detained in connection with the incident including a local cleric, Maulana Sharif, who is accused of inciting the mob.

Khan added police are also look-

ing for Maulana Mirza Aqem, the district leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), one of Pakistan's largest Islamist parties.

Last year, the United States placed Pakistan on a list of "countries of particular concern" for religious freedom violations.

COVID-19 Active Caseload Drops To 2.54 Lakh, Lowest After 179 Days



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: India's COVID-19 active caseload continues to exhibit a sustained downward slide and has significantly dropped to 2.54 lakh, the lowest after 179 days, the Union Health Ministry said on Friday.

The total active cases were 2,53,287 on July 6. India's present active caseload consists of just 2.47 per cent of India's total cases.

The daily new cases in India in the recent days have been around 20,000. The new cases in a span of 24 hours were 20,035 whereas 23,181 recoveries were registered during the same period.

"Recoveries outnumbering daily new cases from last 35 days have ensured a consistent decline in active cases," the ministry said.

The total recovered cases are nearing 99 lakh (98,83,461).

"The gap between recoveries and active cases, that is steadily increasing, has crossed 96 lakh and presently stands at 96,29,207," the ministry highlighted.

The difference in the new recoveries outnumbering new cases has also improved the recovery rate to 96.08 per cent as on date.

The ministry said that 77.61 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 states and UTs.

Kerala has reported the maximum number of single-day recoveries with 5,376 newly recovered cases. A total of 3,612 people have recovered in Maharashtra followed by 1,537 in West Bengal.

Of the new cases, 80.19 per cent are concentrated in 10 states and UTs.

Kerala reported the highest daily new cases at 5,215. It is followed by Maharashtra with 3,509 new cases.

Ten states and UTs account for 80.47 per cent of new deaths. Maharashtra saw the maximum casualties (58). Kerala and West Bengal follow with 30 and 29 daily deaths, respectively.

Daily deaths have been less than 300 since the last 7 days. This has ensured that the mortality remains low and presently stands at 1.45 per cent, the ministry stated.

Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi account for 63 per cent of total deaths in the country, it said.



Sources: India's Drug Regulator Approves AstraZeneca /Oxford Vaccine

Agencies

It is also considering emergency-use authorization applications for vaccines made by Pfizer Inc with Germany's BioNTech, and by Bharat Biotech.

India's drug regulator on Friday approved a coronavirus vaccine developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University for emergency use, two sources with knowledge of the matter told Reuters.

The approval paves the way for its rollout in the world's second worst affected country.

A representative of India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), whose experts are meeting for the second time this week and also considering two other vaccines, declined to comment.

Britain and Argentina have already authorized the vaccine for urgent public use.

India wants to start adminis-

tering the shots soon.

It is also considering emergency-use authorization applications for vaccines made by Pfizer Inc with Germany's BioNTech, and by India's Bharat Biotech.

At more than 10 million, India has reported the second highest number of coronavirus cases after the United States, though its rate of infection has come down significantly from a mid-September peak.

Protesting Farmers Stay Put In Severe Delhi Cold As Talks With Government Remain Deadlocked

NEW DELHI: Thousands of farmers stayed put at their protest venues near Delhi's border on Friday, braving a severe chill as the mercury dipped to 1.1 degrees Celsius on the New Year's Day, the lowest in 15 years, as talks with the government made little headway.

The government and the farm unions had reached some common ground on Wednesday to resolve the protesting farmers' concerns over rise in power tariff and penalties for stubble burning, but the two sides remained deadlocked over the main contentious issues of the repeal of three farm laws and a legal guarantee for MSP.

After the sixth round of negotiations between three union ministers and a 41-member representative group of thousands of farmers protesting on Delhi borders, Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar had said at least 50 per cent resolution has been reached with mutual agreement on two out of four items on the agenda and discussions would continue on the remaining two on January 4.

Security remained tight at the national capital's borders with hundreds of personnel deployed at Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri border points, where the farmers have been camping for more than a month now.

The protests have also led to traffic congestions, forcing the police to divert vehicular



movement.

Taking to Twitter on Friday, the Delhi Traffic Police alerted commuters about the routes that remained closed owing to the agitation and suggested them to take alternative roads.

"Tikri, Dhansa Borders are closed for any Traffic Movement. Jhatikara Borders is open only for LMV (Cars/ Light Motor Vehicles), two wheelers and pedestrian movement," it tweeted.

"The Chilla and Ghazipur Borders are closed for traffic coming from Noida & Ghaziabad to Delhi because of farmer protests. Please take alternate route for coming to Delhi via Anand Vihar, DND, Apsara, Bhopra & Loni Borders.

"Singhu, Auchandi, Piau Maniyari, Saboli & Mangesh borders closed. Please take alternate route via Lampur Safiabad, Palla & Singhu school toll tax borders. Traffic has been diverted from Mukarba and GTK road. Please avoid Outer Ring Road, GTK Road & NH-44," it said in a series of tweets.

"Available Open Borders to Haryana are Jharoda (Only Single Carriageway/Road), Daurala, Kapashera, Badusarai, Rajokri NH-8, Bijwasan/Bajghera, Palam Vihar and Dundaheha Borders," the Delhi Traffic Police said in another tweet.

Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the central government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove the middleman and allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country.

However, the protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of MSP and do away with the mandi system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

The government has repeatedly asserted that the MSP and mandi systems will stay and has accused the Opposition of misleading the farmers. PTI

THE CHILLA AND GHAZIPUR BORDERS ARE CLOSED FOR traffic coming from Noida & Ghaziabad to Delhi because of farmer protests. Please take alternate route for coming to Delhi via Anand Vihar, DND, Apsara, Bhopra & Loni Borders.

India Set To Begin Its Eighth Term As Non-Permanent Member At UNSC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

India, which has been at the forefront of the years-long efforts to reform the UN Security Council, will begin its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the powerful organ of the world body on Friday.

India will sit in the 15-nation United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 2021-22 term as a non-permanent member - the eighth time that the country has had a seat on the powerful horseshoe table.

On Friday, India, Norway, Kenya, Ireland and Mexico will join non-permanent members Estonia, Niger, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Tunisia and Vietnam and the five permanent members China, France, Russia, UK and the US.

India will be UNSC President in August 2021 and will preside over the council again for a month in 2022.

The presidency of the council is held by each of the members in turn for one month, following the English alphabetical order of the Member States' names.

"As the largest democracy... we will be promoting very fundamental values like democracy, human rights and development," India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador T S Tirumurti told PTI. India's message will also be to

ensure "how do we let diversity flourish in a united framework, which is in many ways the United Nations itself. This is something which India as a country, as what it stands for, will take to the council.

Tirumurti said India will "definitely" emphasise a greater need for cooperation in the council, which should not be a place where because of any paralysis of decision making, urgent requirements do not get properly focused.

"We would like to have a more cooperative structure in which we genuinely look out and find solutions and go beyond the rhetoric," the envoy said.

India will also underscore the importance of respect for rule of law and international law.

"The current multilateralism is not factoring in multipolarity. When you have a structure, which is able to accommodate the multipolarity in a multilateral framework, then automatically (there is) a more responsive, more rule-bound and more inclusive process," he said, adding that this will lead to reform in the multilateral system.

"Broadly these are some of the messages which we will carry in various degrees... We will be a country which will reinforce multilateralism. That would be the biggest strength of India in many ways when it gets into the Security Council," he said.

Delhi's Peak Power Demand Soars Beyond 5000 MW Mark, Season's Highest



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pushed by the plummeting temperatures, Delhi's peak power demand soared to the highest this winter at 5021 MW on Friday, discom officials said.

This is the first time this winter that Delhi's peak power demand has crossed the 5000 MW mark. Delhi's peak demand at 5021 MW on January 1 is the highest this winter, said a BSES spokesperson.

"Delhi's peak power demand has increased by 7 percent in 2-days since December 30. It has increased by 43 percent since December 1 and by 60 percent since November 1," he said.

Last year, the peak power demand on January 1, 2020 was 5226 MW.

The highest peak power demand in December 2020 was

4671 MW on December 30, 2020. In just two days, it increased by over 7 percent to 5021 MW, he said.

On December 16, 2020, Delhi's peak power demand crossed 4000 MW for the first time this winter. Delhi's peak power demand in December 2020 had surpassed the peak power demand of December 2019 on 10 corresponding days.

"It is expected to increase further in the coming days if the winter chill continues," he said.

Delhi's peak power demand this winter can go upto 5480 MW, surpassing last year's winter demand. Last year, it had peaked at 5343 MW.

The peak winter power demand in BSES discoms — BRPL and BYPL — had reached 2020 MW and 1165 MW respectively last winter. This year, it is expected to reach 2200 MW and 1270 MW for BRPL and BYPL respectively, he added. Tata Power-DDL has recorded this season's highest peak demand of 1568 MW on Friday, said a spokesperson.

The company expects that the peak demand may touch 1,700 MW this winter season, he added.

NEWS MAKERS

'Red Ant Chutney' As Cure For COVID-19? Ministry Of AYUSH, CSIR Directed To Take A Call In Three Months

Agencies

The infamous 'red ant chutney', which once made it to celebrity chef Gordon Ramsey's menu, has once again triggered a debate in India over a most unlikely subject -- whether it can be considered a cure of the raging coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic outbreak or not.

Why is the new debate, which finds its inception in Odisha, making the news headlines in a country where both the government and pharmaceutical com-

panies have promised medically-proven COVID-19 vaccines in the near future?

It's because of a new directive issued by the Odisha High Court, which has brought the spotlight back on the infamous 'cuisine'.

The court on Thursday asked the Union Ministry of AYUSH and the Director-General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) to take a decision within three months on the proposal to use this 'red ant chutney' in the treatment of COVID-19.

According to a report by the Times of India (TOI), the Odisha



High Court issued the directive on a PIL, filed by an engineer, that sought the court's inter-

vention against alleged inaction on a proposal to research more into the efficacy of using red ant chutney in treating COVID-19.

For the uninitiated, the red ant chutney is consumed by tribals in many states, including Odisha and Chhattisgarh, as a local remedy against cold, shortness of breathe, fatigue, and other diseases. It is made by mixing red ant and green chillies.

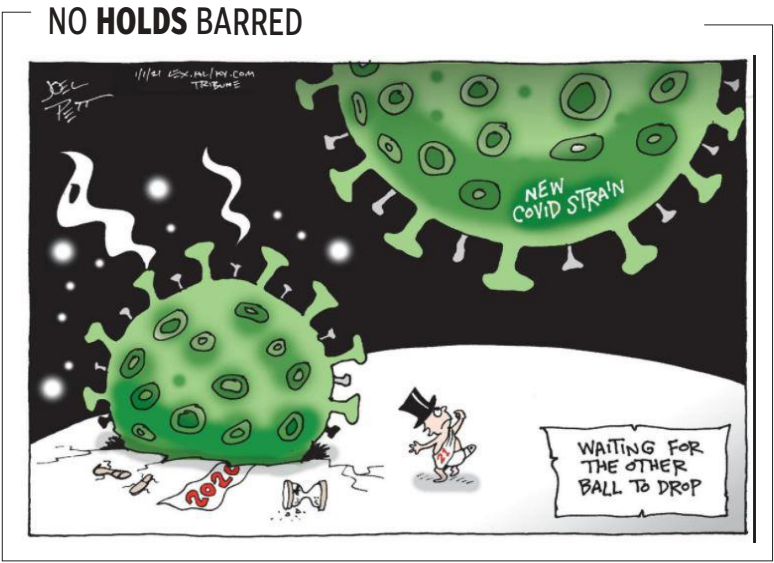
In his petition, the Baipada-based engineer, Nayadhar Padhial, said that this 'chutney' has several medicinal properties, including potential immunity-boosting features.

Padial had sent his proposal to the CSIR on June 23 and to the Union Ministry of AYUSH on July 7. The plea states that this chutney has several "antibacterial properties" that may help fight any infection in the digestive system. The chutney is also rich in protein, calcium, and zinc that help to increase immunity, the plea said.

The Odisha High Court, without contending the merits of the case, asked the Union Ministry of AYUSH and the CSIR to take a call on the matter within three months and pass an appropriate order for the same.

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In March 2000, at least five labourers from Pathribal in south Kashmir were killed in the same fashion. Initially, they too were dubbed as “foreign mercenaries”. Later, their bodies were exhumed. The DNA samples revealed who they were: civilians.

Entire Kashmir Valley is once again at the crossroads. Kashmir’s dispossessed population is in the process of summoning some courage to ask some basic questions.

Families of three young boys who were killed in the outskirts of Srinagar on December 30, 2019, in an alleged gunfight are questioning the version of the government forces. The three slain youths were identified as Aijaz Maqbool, Athar Mushtaq and Zubair Ahmad. Aijaz, a student, was son of a cop. Athar and Aijaz were from south Kashmir’s Pulwama district while Zubair hailed from the neighbouring district, Shopian. Two siblings of one of the slain youths work in the police department.

“There is no reason to dispute the version of an army commander that the three “militants” killed in an encounter in Srinagar’s outskirts had plans to carry out a “big strike”,” Jammu and Kashmir police chief Dilbagh Singh told media in Jammu on December 31. “Hamara chiraag kyouin bhujaya,” Why did you put out our candle?,” said one of the protesting family members in Srinagar while accusing government forces of killing three boys in an extrajudicial manner.

Government forces had made claims in the case of the three boys from Rajouri (they had come to Shopian for work) that they were “militants”. All three were brutally killed in south Kashmir in July, 2020. Later, it turned out that all of them were civilians (labourers). Even police have now accused an Indian army officer and two associates of “planting weapons” on the bodies of the three labourers.

Their extrajudicial killing in July last year sparked furore in the Kashmir Valley. However, their killings in such a manner were not the first.

On April 29, 2010, the Indian Army killed three youths in the Machil sector of north Kashmir’s Kupwara district on the grounds that they were “foreign militants”. After hue and cry from the local residents, an Army court martial in September 2015 confirmed the 2013 verdict and awarded life sentence to six of its personnel found guilty in the Machil extrajudicial killings case of 2010. Those sentenced were identified as Colonel Dinesh Pathania; Captain Opendra; Havildar Devender Kumar; Lance Naik Lakhmi; Lance Naik Arun Kumar; and rifleman Abas Husian.

At the time, it was said that the Indian Army personnel were being punished for human rights violations for the first time in the Kashmir Valley. Later, “procedural reasons” and “want of evidence” saved the guilty personnel.

Initially, a court of inquiry was headed by Major-General G. S. Sangah, then a Brigadier of the 68 Mountain Division. The three boys killed in Machil were identified as Reyaz Ahmad, Mohammad Shafi and Shahzad, all residents of Nadihal Rafiabab of north Kashmir’s Baramullah district. The trio was persuaded to come to Machil by a former special police officer, identified as Bashir Lone, and his associates. They had made a lucrative job offer to the boys and then sold them secretly to the Indian Army personnel for Rs. 50,000 each.

In March 2000, at least five labourers from Pathribal in south Kashmir were killed in the same fashion. Initially, they too were dubbed as “foreign mercenaries”. Later, their bodies were exhumed. The DNA samples revealed who they were: civilians.

It is important to put these killings in their right perspective. To begin with, such killings executed in Pathribal, Machil and Shopian should not be described as fake encounters. Legal experts insist that such killings are extrajudicial killings. Two, these are only the reported cases. We have no idea how many such cases

Busting the Bullet

GOWHAR GEELANI



CREDITS: Syed Shahriyar

It is important to put these killings in their right perspective. To begin with, such killings executed in Pathribal, Machil and Shopian should not be described as fake encounters. Legal experts insist that such killings are extrajudicial killings

remain unnoticed or go unreported for lack of media scrutiny or other reasons.

To make sense of all extrajudicial killings taking place in the Kashmir Valley, it is important to read Kishalay Bhattacharjee’s book Blood On My Hands: Confessions of Staged Encounters. Bhattacharjee’s body of work on extrajudicial killings is a moral chargesheet against government forces.

Kishalay Bhattacharjee’s work is not an imaginary tale of victimhood. His book is a riveting account based on an anonymous confession by an Indian army officer, shedding light on the murky business of extra-judicial killings often referred to as fake or staged encounters. The author is not telling us something new or something that we already do not know as Kashmiris. Yet the details in the book are chilling. The book has finer details of the staged gunfights in India’s northeast, Manipur and Nagaland, the naxal-infested West Ben-

gal, Assam, Punjab, and also in Jammu and Kashmir.

This book is based on confessions of a senior officer in the Indian army (name withheld), narrated to the author the blow-by-blow account of what he refers to as false encounters in January 2014 in the capital city of West Bengal. Ironically, the shadowy details are divulged in Kolkata, the city of joy. Through his investigative work, Bhattacharjee tells us how everything gets washed off under the garb of “national security in India” and how “the relationship between the citizen and state is falling apart in a supposedly democratic set-up.”

The book makes one question the state’s monopoly over violence. It reveals how the innocent Muslim immigrants from Bangladesh, mostly hapless labourers, and Muslims from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are trapped, detained, arrested, made to pose as ‘surrendered militants’, and promised jobs by the army and police, and when the need

is urgent they are made victims of extra-judicial killings/staged encounters.

For starters, the author talks about a young army captain who approaches a police officer to lend him “some amount”. Shockingly, this cryptic conversation between a senior police officer and a young army captain in the eastern Indian state of Assam, near the Bhutan border, is not about borrowing money. The young army officer has already killed two persons and dubbed them as militants in his official record, but inadvertently passed the telegraphic message to his seniors that three persons have been killed. So, to make up for a typographical error, the army officer makes a request to the police officer to lend him a live victim!

The author notes that “those in the northeast and the Kashmir valley appear to have become acclimatised to an environment where extra-judicial killings are a routine occurrence.” In Kashmir context, the army officer reveals to the author that the army had to have hard information, and it was INR one million (10 lakh rupees) for one person.

In the third chapter ‘Confessions of an Army Officer’, there are ghastly details of “Military Intelligence” (MI) funds that are unaccounted for. “This is called the hidden budgetary allowance,” the anonymous army officer tells the author. He also tells Bhattacharjee that the intelligence fund is divided into two categories: “payment of source” and “entertainment of source”.

In chapter seven, the book divulges that “in Jammu and Kashmir the battalions facing the international border buy weapons from Pakistani intelligence agencies. Muslim men from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are abducted from Jammu, kept in the post for two or three months, and once these weapons are purchased, they are killed and shown as militants trying to infiltrate with weapons. The CO [Commanding Officer] gets a thumping report and the unit gets a citation. It is easy to identify the victim. Their looks and dress are not like those of the militants from Pakistan. But who gives a flying fuck for all these details?”

The book also indicts the ‘obedient press’ which seldom gathers courage to question the official versions and statements issued by the PROs of the army and police at the time of a staged encounter. The army’s word is taken as the gospel truth. If the army’s press statement says the victim was a “dreaded terrorist”, he remains so for the complicit press. If the police’s statement dubs a civilian as a “foreign mercenary”, he remains so for the submissive press.

The author through his analytical sweep tells us how even the cold-blooded murders are being legitimised by the government record. This dirty business of staged encounters is about impunity granted to soldiers. It tells us about the systematic and organised attempts from powers that be to obfuscate truth and deny justice. The author notes that “...unless death is at our doors, a stifled scream from afar barely registers.”

Concluding, the families of three slain boys from south Kashmir deserve to know the truth. But can the media in Kashmir ever summon courage to ask how and why or continue to remain an obedient stenographer?

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The views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
Gowhar Geelani is an author-journalist and a political commentator

Time in the Time of Coronavirus

BELEN FERNANDEZ

If time flies when you are having fun, then, it can all but stop when you are not. When you are in the midst of a pandemic, it seems, it can simultaneously drag, fly, and cease to exist at all. And for Palestinians and other already traumatised populations now hit – often disproportionately – by the virus, the time warp is presumably even more warped.

In March, I ended up stuck in the southern Mexican coastal village of Zipolite on account of the pandemic – an abrupt change of pace from the past 17 years, which I had spent darting schizophrenically between countries. There was no official lockdown or curfew in Zipolite, but checkpoints were installed on either side of the village to restrict access and departures.

In a split second, then, my daily routine changed from one of being constantly on the road to one of lying in a hammock watching ants parade across my stomach and thinking of all the things I could be doing were I not lying in a hammock.

While the individual days passed excruciatingly slowly, the months flew by. The end of the year has now spontaneously arrived, and I can’t fathom how it is that I am still in Zipolite.

Indeed, for many across the globe, a coronavirus time warp has taken hold. As a New York Times article notes: “Google has registered a surge of searches for the day of the week”. The Washington Post remarks: “Every day is Blursday”.

Over at Wired magazine, Duke University cognitive neuroscientist Kevin LaBar explains that the human brain “likes novelty ... It squirts dopamine every time there’s something novel that’s happening, and dopamine helps set the initiation of the timing of these events.”

Hence the warping of time perception when there is not much going on. Trauma and anxiety also alter the perception of time, as does uncertainty about the future.

In my own privileged case of quarantine lite – in which I have not had to deal with added stressors like unemployment, lack of food, or domestic discord – the time warp has featured an element of “coronastalgia”, if you will. Bizarrely, I have found myself missing the

very situation that I have yet to emerge from confinement to one village.

But while my brain has apparently decided to view the present as past from some projected future vantage point, others are experiencing a “feeling of being stuck in the present”, as Felix Ringel, an anthropologist of time at Durham University, writes in the Conversation. Ringel observes that, for many, the sensation of “stuckness” is nothing new thanks to the “acceleration of time” produced by neoliberal capitalism, which has “put humanity into crisis mode for several decades already” by disappearing welfare states and job security and generally relegating the masses to infinite precariousness.

To be sure, there was plenty of uncertainty about the future before the onset of the pandemic – and not just in terms of capitalism-driven planetary self-destruction.

Capitalism itself is traumatic for the non-elite majority of the world’s population, upon whose perpetual immiseration the whole system depends. And chronological limbo has long been the norm for many refugees from imperial wars and neoliberal destruction, not to mention climate change and related ills.

Consider the experience of Uyi, a Nigerian artist who attempted the notoriously perilous sea crossing from Libya to Europe in an overcrowded dinghy in 2016. The boat was intercepted in the Mediterranean by a migrant rescue vessel. In the new book Asylum for Sale: Profit and Protest in the Migration Industry, Uyi recalls the effective suspension of time at sea: “We stayed on that boat for what felt like days. It was so horrible. You pay to die. That is how it is: you pay to die.”

Similarly, deadly economics are at play on the United States-Mexico border, where countless migrants have also perished in search of a less uncertain

future. Those who successfully complete the crossing are susceptible to prolonged detention and deportation by the US government, which is the same entity responsible for rendering many migrants’ countries of origin physically and/or economically inhospitable in the first place.

The uncertainty that characterises the detention and deportation regime – particularly when both activities have resulted in migrant deaths – can produce traumatic time warps given the frequent lack of a clear timeline, or of any end in sight.

Nor is there any certainty about the future in the Gaza Strip, which the United Nations previously predicted would be unlivable by 2020. Existing under siege, regular bombardment, and other continuous forms of torment by the Israeli military, Palestinians in Gaza could be said to suffer from a variation of PTSD: permanent – rather than post-traumatic stress disorder.

All of this with the help, of course, of massive aid to Israel from the headquarters of global capitalism – the US – and to the great benefit of the arms industry.

If time flies when you are having fun, then, it can all but stop when you are not. When you are in the midst of a pandemic, it seems, it can simultaneously drag, fly, and cease to exist at all. And for Palestinians and other already traumatised populations now hit – often disproportionately – by the virus, the time warp is presumably even more warped.

Predictably, capitalism has undertaken to fix the pandemic by, you know, tending to the rich countries and leaving the poor ones lethally stuck. As the coronavirus clock stops and starts and time ticks contentedly by, it is as good a time as ever to stop and think.

AL Jazeera

Mental health importance is gaining momentum now-a-days owing to the awareness and importance of its maintenance to live a healthy life. However there are certain things that need immediate attention. There are still some problems related to labelling, misconceptions about mental illnesses and so on. One of the important question that most people ask is whom to approach when mental health gets deteriorated as most people are very much confused about the roles and responsibilities of various mental health professionals, therefore it is important to clear the misconceptions and to understand who are involved in mental health services and what is the role of various mental health professionals in the alleviation of various mental health issues and in the maintenance of sound mental health.

A mental health professional is a health care practitioner or social and human services provider who offers services for the purpose of improving an individual's mental health or to treat mental health disorders and/or researches in the field of mental health. There are many types of mental health professionals varying in education, experience, certifications, and specialties. The public needs to know the roles and responsibilities of various mental health professionals so that they remain educated and informed about whom to approach for the various problems they face personally or they face with respect to their family and children. In order to understand it in a better way let's draw an analogy. When we develop some issues with the health of our heart, whom do we approach? Certainly a cardiologist. In case we get some problem in the functioning of our kidney, we prefer nephrologists who are trained for looking into kidney issues. Both are doctors (be it cardiologist or nephrologist) as both have obtained MBBS degree, although their specialization is different (they have M.D. in separate branches of medicine). Similarly, although mental health professionals work in areas of mental health, they differ with each other on certain grounds like education, experience, training, specialization and certification.

There are different kinds of experts who specialize in different areas of mental health. Each of them plays a key role in identifying and treating psychological and psychiatric health issues. There are a number of professionals associated with mental health like psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, mental health counselors, psychiatric social workers, remedial educationists, special educators, speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychiatric nurses and the list is endless and exhaustive. Let's know them for our own benefit, so that we remain informed about their roles and responsibilities towards the public.

Psychiatrists

Before knowing a psychiatrist, let's understand what psychiatry is about? Psychiatry is the branch of medicine that deals with assessing, diagnosing, treating, and managing various mental health disorders which influence emotion, cognition, and behavior. Psychiatrists are doctors who specialize in psychiatry; they have completed an MD (Doctor of Medicine) in psychiatry after an MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery) course. They focus more on the medical aspect of the various psychopathologies.

Who is a Psychiatrist?

A psychiatrist is a person who has completed an MBBS and proceeds further to study psychiatric medicine. They specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues. During their specialized training, psychiatrists study the brain's functions and the complex relationship between the body and brain. They are qualified to distinguish between physical and psychological causes of mental and physical distress. They are also the only type of mental health professionals who are licensed to prescribe and monitor medication.

Psychologist

Let's understand psychology first. Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behavior. All aspects of thoughts, feelings and emotions that motivate our actions are scientifically evaluated through various assessments and tests. Psychological knowledge is applied to understanding and solving problems in different spheres of human activity, and is also used in the assessment and treatment of mental health issues.

Who is a Clinical Psychologist?

Mental Health Professionals: Who They Are?

WASIM KAKROO AND AMIR BASHIR



There are different kinds of experts who specialize in different areas of mental health. Each of them plays a key role in identifying and treating psychological and psychiatric health issues. There are number of professionals associated with mental health like psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, mental health counselors, psychiatric social workers, remedial educationists, special educators, speech therapists, occupational therapists, psychiatric nurses and the list is endless and exhaustive

Clinical psychologists have a degree in psychology and are experts in human behavior. They use scientific methods to study the factors that influence people's thoughts, perceptions, emotions, and actions. They use evidence-based strategies and interventions to help people overcome challenges and cope with life issues such as various mental illnesses, relationship problems, parenting issues, challenges in adolescence, lifestyle effects on health etc. Clinical psychologists use their clinical skills to work with people who have mental health issues like anxiety, depression, eating disorders, panic disorder and substance abuse. A clinical psychologist is a mental health professional with highly specialized training in the diagnosis and psychological treatment of mental, behavioral and emotional illnesses. A practicing clinical psychologist must have atleast a professional (not academic) m.phil degree in clinical psychology according to Rehabilitation council of India and must be certified by the same agency. Clinical psychologists do not prescribe medications to treat mental illness. Rather, they are specialized and trained in psychotherapies and use psychological techniques to treat mental health disorders. Clinical psychologists usually work in close collaboration with psychiatrists and other mental health professionals.

Counselor

What is Counseling?

Counseling is a type of applied psychology that focuses on helping people resolve emotional, behavioral or social problems arising from various life situations. This could include issues at the workplace, school or college, and conflict within the family. Counseling uses various structured processes—either through directive or non-directive guidance—for the person to make rational decisions. Counseling work is completely confidential. Counseling focuses on the following aspects: Resolving normal or moderate issues arising due to life events and other stressors rather than serious mental health issues.

Who is a counselor?

Counselors can have very varied lengths of training, from a year long intensive training to a few months by correspondence. A counselor is trained in the art of listening and has skills to help a person analyze their problems and find a solution. Counselors deal with various issues that are as broad and varied as those undertaken by psychologists, psychiatrists and psychotherapists. The education for counselor is Masters in psychology (at least in India). If the counselor observes that counseling isn't addressing the person's needs because the underlying condition is severe and may need other interventions, they refer the person to a more qualified mental health expert like clinical psychologists for diagnosis, treatment, therapy, or psychiatrists for medication, as the case may be.

Psychiatric Nurse

A psychiatric nurse is a mental health professional qualified to assess, diagnose, and treat individuals with psychiatric disorders. They work with individuals, families, groups, and communities, and assess their mental health needs. They also help families understand the challenges of the mental illness and help them offer the appropriate care their loved one needs. Psychiatric nurse has bachelors in nursing and then masters in Psychiatric nursing in a hospital based setting.

Psychiatric Social Worker

Psychiatric social workers are mental health professionals trained to help patients find solutions to many life and social issues that come with mental illness. A patient's relationships, career, and quality of life are significantly affected due to the illness; and this can be a very difficult situation to navigate. Psychiatric social workers help patients cope with these aspects of their lives. Education level for social workers is masters in social work and for psychiatric social workers, the qualification as per RCI is m.phil in psychiatric social work from RCI recognized institutions.

Occupational Therapists (OTs)

OTs are health care professionals specialized in occupational therapy and occupational science. OTs and occupational therapy assistants (OTAs) use scientific bases, and a holistic perspective to promote a person's ability to fulfill their daily routines and roles. OTs have immense training in the physical, psychological, and social aspects of human functioning deriving from an education grounded in anatomical and physiological concepts, and psychological perspectives. They enable individuals across the lifespan by optimizing their abilities to perform activities that are meaningful to them ("occupations"). Human occupations include activities of daily living, work/ vocation, play, education, leisure, rest and sleep, and social participation. OTs work in a variety of fields, including pediatrics, orthopedics, neurology, low vision therapy, physical rehabilitation, mental health, assistive technology, oncological rehabilitation, and geriatrics. Education level for OT is masters in the same field.

Special Educators

A special educator is a mental health professional who works with students who have need for special attention and care because of problems with the functioning of their brain. They deal with students who are differently abled in areas of learning, mental and physical abilities. A special educator identifies the needs of students who require special care and assistance and plans and develops individualized educational program for every student with special needs. They also supervise and record each of their activities to make assessments of their progress and discuss the student's improvement with teachers and parents. In order to become a special educator, one has to do bachelors in special education and then masters in the same field.

Besides there are other mental health professionals like speech therapists, remedial educationists, and so on, the list is exhaustive and endless.

Importance of Knowing about Mental Health Professionals

It is of immense importance to get to know mental health in general and mental health professionals in particular. Different mental health professionals have different roles to play in mental health promotion. To ensure that the treatment is guided in right direction, it is important to know about the key roles, specializations, education and training of different mental health professionals because now a days the boundaries are so porous that people are interfering in one another's spheres which not only degrades the quality of treatment but also led common people to suffer in many ways. It is the responsibility of the mental health professionals as well as the public to work in close collaboration with each other so that the people who are in need of such services can reach different professionals at earliest so that the issues are resolved before they turn into something unmanageable or at least more difficult to treat.

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Keep the Masks On After Vaccination

Living in a globalised world, our leaders cannot rest assured by ensuring vaccination of just their own residents and citizens. The drive to protect one and all would be successful when everyone secures a shot. For now, the immediate parameter that'll prove the impact of these vaccinations would be the change in the number of deaths and hospitalisations

During the initial days of this year, we were clueless about how to contain the spread of Covid-19 infection, limit the transmission, and protect the more vulnerable among us. Yet, in a span of a few months we are at a critical juncture where vaccines have already been deployed and more are expected to be introduced. The approval and distribution of more than one Covid-19 vaccine within a year is nothing short of extraordinary and gives hope that the pandemic could start to turn a corner in the first half of next year.

Vaccine developed by Moderna is the latest to secure an approval from the medicine regulator in the US. The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine could be the next one to get the regulator's nod in the UK, which will boost supplies and access to jabs in several developed countries to begin with. More than a million people have already been vaccinated in several countries and as more countries grant emergency use of the vaccine, many more people are likely to be inoculated before the year ends. But all in all, it is going to be a long road before we can safely allow normalcy to return to our lives. Vaccinating everyone on the planet would be a challenge and requires concerted efforts by the

world community.

Living in a globalised world, our leaders cannot rest assured by ensuring vaccination of just their own residents and citizens. The drive

vaccine might keep us from becoming seriously ill or from developing serious complications. But how effective it will be in stopping the transmission remains to be seen. Therefore, even as more

Vaccine developed by Moderna is the latest to secure an approval from the medicine regulator in the US. The Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine could be the next one to get the regulator's nod in the UK, which will boost supplies and access to jabs in several developed countries to begin with

to protect one and all would be successful when everyone secures a shot. For now, the immediate parameter that'll prove the impact of these vaccinations would be the change in the number of deaths and hospitalisations. Also, what remains unclear at this point is if the respective vaccination drives bring down the infection rate quickly. Getting a Covid-19 vaccine might prevent us from getting infected, or if we get Covid-19, the

and more vaccines get approved, it is too early to lower down our guard. Masks are likely to remain our best defence, and so will be social distancing and maintaining good personal hygiene. There is light at the end of the tunnel but it will pay to act responsibly.

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Khaleej Times

2 KAS Officers Given Additional Charge

Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday gave additional charge to two KAS officers. According to an order, Reyaz Ahmad Shah (KAS), Chief Executive Officer, Urban Development Agency, Kashmir, has been given charge of the post of Joint Director, Hospitality and Protocol, Kashmir, in addition to his Own duties, till further orders. Ashima Sher (KAS), Collector, Land Acquisition, PHE, Irrigation and Flood Control, Jammu, has been given the charge of the post of Deputy Director, Hospitality and Protocol (Stores), in addition to her own duties, till further orders. (GNS)

Kashmir Again Abuzz With Tourists In New Year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

SRINAGAR: After a lull of nearly one-and-a-half years, Kashmir was again abuzz with tourists as thousands of people from different parts of the country descended on the picturesque Gulmarg, Pahalgam and other areas of the valley for the New Year.

As tourist arrivals spiked, the region witnessed huge traffic jams. The situation was such in the popular skiing destination Gulmarg that some tourists had to ring in the New Year from their vehicles stuck in traffic.

“One needs to understand that global destinations are ruled out due to the pandemic and Kashmir became an obvious choice for domestic travellers,” says Nighat Shah, the reservation manager with a prominent hotel chain in Srinagar and Gulmarg.

Hotels and resorts organised various events on the New Year’s Eve.

Firecrackers illuminated the sky and musical shows enthralled the tourists.

The tourism department too organised an event in Gulmarg that drew a large number of visitors. Kashmir Divisional Commissioner P K Pole was the chief guest at the event.

“After all, people have undergone a lot of stress during 2020. Our effort was to help them de-stress,” says Masroor Hussain, the general manager of a hotel in Srinagar.

Managing Director of Ahad Group of Hotels Asif Burza says that after many years the tourism industry in the valley has seen such a busy December.

“Not only in Gulmarg, occupancy of hotels in Pahalgam and Srinagar too increased. There is a feel good factor in the tourism industry and we are looking forward to a great season ahead,” he said.

He thanked the Kashmir administration for controlling the COVID-19

pandemic. “Of course the COVID crisis was well managed.... It encouraged tourists to visit,” he said.

With the pandemic upsetting plans of travel to Europe, Kashmir emerged as the most preferred destination for tourists, he said.

Hussain feels that efforts made by hoteliers to woo domestic tourists by launching a programme, ‘Unlock Kashmir’, helped.

“It is a tough fight ahead. But, the aim of this programme was to garner support as Kashmir’s tourism can go to higher places if supported together by private and government players,” he said.

The tourism industry in Kashmir has suffered in the past few years for various reasons, particularly after the government imposed restrictions following the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir’s special status in August 2019 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nighat Shah said that every tourist is

well informed about the COVID-19 protocols and at the hotels “we follow all the COVID norms religiously. We undertake regular cleanliness drives and maintain quality and hygiene. We are committed to provide the best experience to the guests, but we also take extra precautions in view of the pandemic.”

In Pahalgam, Rattan Shah from Gujarat said that he chose the destination after studying the impact of COVID-19 in Kashmir on a regular basis. “It was perfectly fine to be at a place where the impact is not so serious,” he said.

Summi Gupta and her husband Bimal feel that the decision to come to Kashmir was right. “Initially we were sceptical but after we came here, the hospitality of the people was amazing,” said Bimal. His wife nodded in agreement and added, “Work from home has its own stress. I guess it was a much-needed break. (PTI)

Army To Buy 12 Patrol Boats For Pangong Surveillance

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army has finalised procurement of 12 high-performance patrol boats to enhance its surveillance of large water bodies, including the Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh where India and China are locked in a bitter border standoff since early May.

The Army said it inked a contract with Goa Shipyard Ltd, a state-run public sector undertaking, for 12 fast patrol boats for surveillance and patrolling of large water bodies, including those in high altitude areas.

“Delivery would commence from May 2021,” the Army tweeted.

Official sources said the boats are being procured for surveillance of Pangong lake as well as other water bodies in mountainous areas.

In a statement, Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) said it signed a contract with the Indian Army for supply of the ‘high performance specialised patrol crafts’ on Thursday and that they will be fitted with specialised equipment to meet the requirement of the force.

“These craft will be constructed at GSL, Goa and will be only few crafts in the world for such specialized operations,” it said in a brief statement.

Nearly 50,000 Indian Army troops are deployed in a high state of combat readiness in various mountainous locations in eastern Ladakh in sub-zero

temperatures as multiple rounds of talks between the two sides have not yielded concrete outcome to resolve the standoff.

China has also deployed an equal number of troops, according to officials.

The eighth and last round of military talks had taken place on November 6 during which both sides broadly discussed disengagement of troops from specific friction points.

Last week, Army Chief Gen MM Naranave visited various high-altitude forward areas in eastern Ladakh, including those around the Pangong lake, and reviewed India’s overall military preparedness.

Around three-and-half months back, Indian troops occupied a number of strategic heights in the Mukhpari, Rechin La and Magar hill areas around the southern bank of the Pangong lake after the Chinese military attempted to intimidate them in the area on the intervening night of August 29 and 30.

The Pangong lake and areas around it are considered very important. India has stepped up surveillance of the lake after the standoff began in early May.

The face-off began on May 5 following violent clashes between the two armies in the Pangong lake area. The incident in Pangong Tso was followed by a similar incident in north Sikkim on May 9. (PTI)

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Severe Cold ...

in hordes to celebrate the arrival of the New Year, they said. The resort experienced freezing weather as the mercury there settled at the low of minus 9.0 degrees Celsius Thursday night and was the coldest recorded place in Jammu and Kashmir, the officials said. The cold weather across the valley resulted in freezing of water supply lines and water bodies in several areas, they said.

Srinagar city recorded a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius -- down from the previous night’s minus 5.9 degrees Celsius. Pahalgam recorded a low of minus 7.8 degrees Celsius.

Qazigund -- the gateway town to the valley -- recorded the minimum of minus 5.7 degrees Celsius, while Kupwara, in north Kashmir, registered a low of minus 5.6 degrees Celsius and Kokernag, in the south, minus 7.8 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

The Met office has said while the weather is likely to remain dry over the next two days, there is a possibility of a spell of rain or snow at isolated to widespread places over a few days from Monday.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of ‘Chillai-Kalan’ -- the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies including the famous Dal Lake here as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are most frequent and maximum during this period and most areas, especially in the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

While ‘Chillai-Kalan’ -- which began on December 21 -- will end on January 31, the cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day-long ‘Chillai-Khurd’ and a 10-day-long ‘Chillai-Bachha’.

Indian Soldier ...

ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and intense shelling with mortars along the LoC in the Nowshera sector in district Rajouri,” a defence spokesman said.

Indian army retaliates befittingly, he said.

Pakistan again shelled the Nowshera sector at 5:30 pm, the officials said.

Naib Subedar Ravinder was critically injured in the 5:30 pm incident and he later succumbed, the spokesman said.

He was a brave, highly motivated and a sincere soldier. The nation will always remain indebted to him for his supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty, the spokesman said.

On Thursday, at least five houses and a mosque was damaged in Tangdhar sector of north Kashmir’s Kupwara district in cross-LoC shelling.

Jammu and Kashmir recorded 5,100 instances of ceasefire violations by Pakistan along the Line of Control (LoC) in 2020, the highest in the past 18 years with an average of 14 cases daily, according to official sources.

In these ceasefire violations, 36 people, including 24 security personnel, were killed and over 130 injured, as per data.

Security officials said that shelling and firing by Pakistani troops was “very heavy” in 2020, virtually making the 2003 India-Pakistan border truce “redundant”.

“Pakistani troops repeatedly targeted forwards posts and villages along the LoC and the International Border to create a fear psychosis among the people and destabilise peace along the borders,” a senior police officer said. (PTI)

OGW Arrested ...

in recruiting local youth in militant ranks and distribution of money, the spokesman said, adding, his bank transactions are being investigated.

Incriminating material of the proscribed outfit LeT and explosive substance has been recovered from his possession which have been taken into case records for further investigation, he said.

India, Pakistan ...

covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities,” the MEA said in a statement.

The exchange of the list came amid frosty ties between the two countries over the Kashmir issue as well as cross-border militancy.

The agreement was signed on December 31, 1988 and it came into force on January 27, 1991.

The pact mandates the two countries to inform each other of the nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under the agreement on the first of January of every calendar year.

This is the 30th consecutive exchange of the list with the first one taking place on January 1, 1992. (PTI)

Pakistan Hands

shared with the Indian High Commission in Islamabad a list of 319 Indian prisoners in Pakistan, including 49 civilians and 270 fishermen prisoners, it said.

Reciprocally, the Indian government also simultaneously shared the list of 340 Pakistani prisoners in India, including 263 civilians and 77 fishermen with the High Commission for Pakistan in New Delhi, the FO said.

The two countries under the agreement are required to exchange lists of prisoners in each other’s custody twice a year, on 1st January and 1st July.

Despite recurrent tension over the years, the two countries have been exchanging the lists of prisoners without any break.

The exchange of information comes despite the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan. (PTI)

New Year Starts ...

“The frequent shutdowns and Internet gags have made the business system in Pulwama and Shopian miserable,” they said.

The frequent internet suspension in South Kashmir has also been irking the students who in absence of class work is directly dependent on online classes.

Sources said that since last week of November, internet services were suspended 12 times in South Kashmir due to which business and student community is suffering a lot.

Aabid Hussain, a student of Central University said that due to frequent internet blockade he has missed all-important classes.

“This internet blockade creates a lot of impediments among the students who are enrolled in different colleges and universities in and outside J&K,” he said.

“When the world is about to get 5G services, why are we being even deprived of 2G services,” said Mudasir Ahmad, a resident of Pulwama. “If the government claims that everything is normal here, then why internet services are snapped so frequently.”

“We request authorities that think about the suffering of student and business community before snapping down internet services,” locals said—Agencies

Jeweller’s Killing ...

that “any Indian national irrespective of faith, caste or colour who comes to Kashmir with the intention of settling here, will be treated as an agent of RSS and not as a civilian”

According to family friends, Satpal has lived and worked in Kashmir for over three decades. He came here in early 80’s and worked as a gold smith for a brief period. Following the outbreak of militancy, Satpal moved again to his hometown in Amritsar district of Punjab.

“He used to make small gold ornaments for local jewellers. In late 90’s, he returned to Kashmir and resumed his business again” a close family friend told Kashmir Observer.

After the abrogation of special status followed by introduction of domicile laws, Satpal, his friend said, purchased a shop in Saraibala and a house in Indira Nagar. Besides Satpal, his brother is also in the jewellery business. He owns a flat in Sainik Colony Jammu, the family friend said. Two years earlier, he said, Nischal’s son died of cancer. He is survived by his widow and three children, including a daughter settled in Amritsar. (With inputs from Agencies)

Parties Condemn

Taking to Twitter, National Conference Vice-President Omar Abdullah said the killing was very unfortunate.

“Very unfortunate. There can be no justification for this kind of violence. May the soul of the departed rest in peace & may his family find strength at this difficult time,” Abdullah wrote.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti while expressing condolences to the family of Singh, said violence has no place in a civilised society.

“Condemn the gruesome killing of an innocent man in Srinagar yesterday. Violence has no place in a civilised society. Deepest condolences to the bereaved family,” she said in a tweet.

Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee also condemned the killing and conveyed deepest condolences to the bereaved family, a statement from the party said.

Describing the incident as “very unfortunate, mindless and a shameful act”, the JKPC said the killing of innocent people was not acceptable in a civilized society and deserves strong condemnation.

The JKPC appealed to the government to identify the killers so that exemplary punishment is given to them to ensure justice to the deceased.

Camus Over ...

“In this war-torn city’s woeful chaos, words do keep sanity and spirit intact.”

Apart from this nostalgic socialist, Camus admirers can be seen passionately discussing his existentialist and absurdism philosophy over a cup of tea.

Tracing Camus’s absurdism, from a collection of four letters about resistance, rebellion, and death, some avid readers of Srinagar say The Plague author highly detested the

“philosopher of the absurd” title.

“Call it ‘Camus’s Absurd’ or Paradox, but his integrity as a writer makes him irresistible,” says Sheikh Sahil, a political science student fuelling tea talks on the Bund.

But while these budding literati somehow recreate the classic coffee house ambience in teashops and stalls, they end up earning the slur of “Paper tigers” from some cynics.

However, these young men don’t seem to give two-hoots about such labeling. Instead they sustain Srinagar’s literal hangouts, with their thoughtful stances, heavy eyes, and grave mood.

As they spark caffeine conversations, Srinagar’s classic, yet subdued, literary scene has clearly resuscitated itself.

Over endless sips of tea, these new age book buffs of Kashmir talk in plots and sub-plots, with thriller fans among them reading pattern seven in the tea they taste every day.

“Mostly, Camus drives these discourses,” Sahil continues. “It’s not over-romanticism or any kind of hero-worshipping, but an effort to keep the literary legacy of the rebel writer alive.”

These fervent tea talks get steamy after Camus’s stint as a secret soldier during the French Occupation finds mention.

“Despite his life torn asunder by wars and conflicts, Camus stayed optimistic,” Sahil says.

“That’s why, perhaps, he wrote songs for the oppressed hearts: ‘In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.’ ”

Grenade Attack ...

However, no loss of life or injury was reported in the attack. Soon after the attack, government forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation to nab the attackers.

The attack on SSB comes a day after unidentified gunmen shot dead a jeweller in the busy market of Saraibala here on Thursday.

Vaccination To Start ...

have been included in the Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI) committee constituted for the Covid-19 vaccination programme, adding that it was for the first time that the committee will have experts to monitor and study the adverse health events after inoculation. He informed that an AEFI is an untoward medical occurrence following immunisation, which does not necessarily have a causal relationship with the usage of the vaccine, as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO),” he added.

Regarding vaccination of the population and target groups, Haroon, as per official spokesperson said that a phase-wise strategy will be incorporated wherein health care workers have been identified followed by frontline workers of seven lakh population, adding that it would be followed by high risk population consisting greater than 50 years of age and less than 50 years of age associated with comorbid conditions.

“He said in Phase-I, a total of around 28 lakh (2.8 million) population have been identified for the COVID-19 vaccination across Jammu and Kashmir,” he said, adding “He added that detailed instructions on infection prevention and control practices during vaccination and management of minor, severe, serious AEFI would be issued. He also informed the meeting that a detailed strategy has been chalked out and a requisition for deep freezers and other equipment has already been sent to the Government of India.

Speaking on the occasion, Dulloo, as per official spokesperson asked the concerned heads of GMCs and SKIMS to lay more emphasis on vaccination site and vaccination session parts which include waiting rooms, vaccination rooms and observation rooms.

“He directed the concerned heads to focus on the management side properly besides stressing on training sessions of the doctors and staff which would be involved in the vaccination programme and added that employing such mechanism would resolve the majority of issues during vaccination. He directed the concerned CMOs to hold frequent meetings at district level so that grievances, if any, would be resolved with timely intervention,” he said.

Dulloo, as per the official spokesperson asked tertiary care hospitals viz SKIMS, Soura and eight GMCs of J&K to make a provision for a dedicated ward in their hospitals during vaccination session so that if any AEFI surfaces it would be resolved with timely intervention.

“He also asked them to follow all the AEFI Standard Operating Protocols so that no shortcoming would remain during the process. He asked them to ensure streamlining of the system in their respective domains with respect to drugs, equipment and other requirements,” he said.

“He also directed them to have proper documentation under different formats besides verbal autopsy, which has to be very sensitive and asked them to make the Adverse Drug reaction Monitoring Centers functional at all GMCs and SKIMS. He said that the designated spokesperson would be nominated at UT, division and district level who would be only authorized persons to talk to the media on the subject,” he added.

Mehbooba Writes ...

such incidents brought “disrepute” to the armed forces and are “a grave violation” of human rights.

“I am sure you are aware of the unfortunate incident at Parimpora on 30th December. Three boys, the youngest being all of 17 years old, were killed in what the family has alleged to be a staged gunfight,” she said.

“Questions are also looming over this encounter & there are conflicting versions & reports from police & the army. Justice can be served only if it is swift & therefore I request you to initiate an impartial investigation into the matter immediately,” the former chief minister said.

Police had claimed on Wednesday to have killed three militants in an overnight encounter in Parimpora area of Srinagar, but families of the slain youths said they had no connection with militancy and that two of them were students.

Mufti said the incident comes close on the heels of police filing a charge sheet against an Army officer and two others in connection with the killing of three men from Rajouri district in an alleged fake encounter at Amshipora in Shopian last July.

The PDP leader said she and the lieutenant governor might not be on the same page on most political matters, “but I am certain we agree that such incidents bring disrepute to the armed forces and are a grave violation of human rights”.

Mufti said while she was aware that the administration was apprehensive about returning the bodies of the three youths killed in Srinagar to their families, “this callous decision will only exacerbate their sense of loss and pain”.

“One hopes that you will rethink this decision and allow them to get closure. A mother who grieves the sudden & tragic death of her beloved son shouldn’t be deprived of the last chance to see his face. Nor does she deserve to have to beg for his dead body. This is simply inhuman & unacceptable,” she said in the letter.

Mufti urged Sinha to intervene and ensure that the families get a chance to perform the last rites as per their wishes.

Meanwhile, Anantnag MP Hasnain Masoodi spoke to Sinha on Thursday evening over the issue, the National Conference said, adding that the Lt governor has assured an impartial inquiry into the incident. PTI

Two Of The 3,...

A shutdown was observed in many parts of Srinagar on Friday against the killings of the youths in the encounter on Wednesday, officials said.

The police spokesman said the encounter started following inputs from the Army and was a joint operation of the Army, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the police.

“After the cordon was laid, militants lobbed a grenade from inside and fired upon the search party. Although as per SoP, militants were repeatedly appealed by the troops to surrender in the evening and again in the morning. However, instead of surrendering, they fired upon troops and eventually were killed in a fire-fight, the spokesman said.

He said the claim of Ganai’s parents that he went to the university was verified and cross-checked through modern techniques, including records of the telecom department.

“Contrary to the claims, the verified digital evidence revealed and corroborated that Ganai and Ather Mushtaq had gone to Hyperdora and from there to the place of occurrence only, he said.

The police spokesman said another youth -- Zubair Lone -- had gone first to Pulwama, then Anantnag, where from he went to Shopian and then again to Pulwama and finally came to Parimpora here.

He said a background check has also revealed that Ganai and Mustaq were both overground workers (OGWs) and provided logistic support to militants. “Antecedents and verifications too show that both were radically inclined and had aided militants of LeT -- now so-called The Resistance Front (TRF) -- outfit,” the spokesman said.

The police said one of OGWs presently under police custody has also corroborated Ganai’s association with LeT militant Faisal Mustaq Baba who was killed in an encounter in the Meej area of Pampore in June last year.

Mushtaq was a relative and OGW of Hizbul Mujahideen top commander Rayees Kachroo who was killed in 2017, the spokesman said. The police, however, said it is investigating the case. “Nevertheless, police are investigating the case from all possible angles,” the spokesman added.

Mainstream political parties, including the National Conference and the PDP, have called for an impartial investigation into the incident.

During the shutdown on Friday, shops and business establishments in several parts of Srinagar, especially in the old city, were shut. The shutdown was also observed in Maisuma and its adjoining areas near the Lal Chowk city centre.

However, public transport was playing normally in these areas, officials said. The shutdown was observed after reports surfaced on social media that separatist groups had called for a strike across the valley on Friday to protest the killings. (PTI)

J&K Govt Signs MoU With NAFED For High Density Fruit Plantation

- **NAFED To Invest Rs.1700 Crore For High Density Plantation Covering 5500 Hectares In Next 5 Years**
- **Three Clusters Of Cold Storage In J&K At A Cost Of Rs. 500 Crore To Be Set Up By NAFED**

Observer News Service

NEW DELHI: In an important step towards the promotion of Horticulture produce of Jammu & Kashmir and to take it to the global market, the J&K Government Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED), apex organization of marketing co-operatives for agricultural produce in the country.

The MoU with NAFED, according to an official spokesman, is a game changer for the Horticulture sector in Jammu and Kashmir. High Density plantation of Apple, Walnut, Cherry, Flowers etc has potential to increase the income of farmers by 3 to 4 times, he said.

After signing of the MoU, NAFED to cover 5500 Hectares at a cost of Rs.1700 Crore in the next five years with major focus on Apple, Walnut, Cherry, Pear and other significant horticulture produce. NAFED will also

set up 20 Farmer-Producer Organizations, one in each district, in the next three months.

The NAFED will set up three cold storage clusters, one each in North Kashmir, South Kashmir and Kathua at a cost of Rs.500 Crore, besides ensuring Geographical Indications tags (GI Tags) for all premium/niche horticulture produce, branding and marketing of fruit crops like Apple, Walnut, Cherry, Olive, Litchi etc.

In presence of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the MoU was signed between Navin Choudhary, Principal Secretary to the Government, Agriculture and Horticulture Department, J&K and SK Chadha, Managing Director, NAFED.

Speaking on the occasion, the LG Sinha observed that the J&K Government is tirelessly working on four issues that are being addressed on priority -Increasing productivity through intervention of technology; ensuring best price and market support; mitigation of risks, and diversi-



fication through allied activities.

The LG said that Horticulture produce of Jammu division will be given a major push for

marketing and NAFED will also look into the possibility of high density plantation of Apple in Kishtwar and Bhaderwah.

"The UT Government will work with NAFED to promote horticulture produce and to set up a quality planting material lab. GI

tagging of all premium horticulture produce and marketing is top priority of the administration. The investment in various areas to promote and market horticulture produce is being made for faster expansion. We intend to increase Cold Storage capacity, identify and promote horticulture produce of Jammu division to ensure better price to farmers," the Lt Governor said.

As per the MoU, NAFED with J&K Government will create post-harvest infrastructure for agriculture/horticulture crops in the form of Cold Atmosphere Stores, Grading and Processing facilities in future at the locations decided by the UT administration. Besides, implementation of high density plantation, NAFED will develop hi-tech nurseries for raising root stock and also import it to facilitate the farmers.

This historical initiative involves setting up virus indexing labs as per latest protocol for testing of quality planting material. The MoU has given a major thrust to marketing. The

NAFED with J&K Government will work on branding and marketing of fruit crops and establishment of market linkages for exotic and non-seasonal vegetables and flowers in different metro cities of India.

SK Chadha, Managing Director, NAFED said the organisation will work in a time bound manner on each point to increase productivity and also ensure availability of hybrid vegetable seeds and high value exotic vegetable seeds while giving special focus to popularize aromatic plants of Jammu division.

Navin Choudhary said that all the required infrastructure including cold storage and processing facilities will be made available in a short span of time to take horticulture of Jammu and Kashmir in the global market. The robust mechanism for branding and marketing of horticulture produce and market linkage within the country will revolutionize the agriculture and horticulture sector in Jammu and Kashmir, he added.

THE UT GOVERNMENT WILL WORK WITH NAFED TO PROMOTE HORTICULTURE PRODUCE AND TO SET UP A QUALITY PLANTING MATERIAL LAB. GI TAGGING of all premium horticulture produce and marketing is top priority of the administration. The investment in various areas to promote and market horticulture produce is being made for faster expansion. We intend to increase Cold Storage capacity, identify and promote horticulture produce of Jammu division to ensure better price to farmers,"

RBI To Conduct Simultaneous Purchase Of Govt Securities On Jan 7



Agencies

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday said it will conduct simultaneous purchase and sale of government securities under open market operations (OMOs) for Rs 10,000 crore each on January 7.

The decision was taken after a review of current liquidity and financial conditions, the RBI said in a statement. Eligible participants should submit their bids in electronic format on RBI's core banking solution (E-Kuber) system between 10 and 11 am on January 7.

Simultaneous purchase and sale of G-sec under OMOs, popularly known as Operation Twist, involves purchasing the securities of longer maturities and selling an equal value of securities of shorter maturities.

Simultaneous sale and purchase of government bonds are conducted with the objective of managing bond yields and improve monetary transmission. RBI has reduced the

repo rate by 115 basis points in 2020, but lending rate cuts by banks has not been commensurate.

On January 7, the RBI will purchase three government securities (G-Sec) of different maturity dates aggregating to Rs 10,000 crore and sell two securities aggregating to the same amount using the multiple price auction method.

The result will be announced on the same day and successful participants should ensure availability of the requisite amount of securities in their current account or subsidiary general ledger (SGL) account by noon on January 8.

With the heightening of COVID-19 pandemic risks, certain financial market segments have been experiencing a tightening of financial conditions as reflected in the hardening of yields and widening of spreads. The central bank has been constantly reviewing current and evolving liquidity and market conditions.

Drugmakers To Hike Prices For 2021 As Pandemic, Political Pressure Put Revenues At Risk

Agencies

The increases come as pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer are playing hero by developing vaccines for Covid-19 in record time

Drugmakers including Pfizer Inc, Sanofi SA, and GlaxoSmith-Kline Plc plan to raise US prices on more than 300 drugs in the United States on January 1, according to drugmakers and data analyzed by healthcare research firm 3 Axis Advisors.

The hikes come as drugmakers are reeling from effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has reduced doctor visits and demand for some drugs. They are also fighting new drug price cutting rules from the Trump administration, which would reduce the industry's profitability.

The companies kept their price increases at 10% or below, and the largest drug companies to raise prices so far, Pfizer and Sanofi, kept nearly all of their increases 5% or less, 3 Axis said. 3 Axis is a consulting firm that works with pharmacists' groups, health plans and foundation on drug pricing and supply chain issues.

GSK did raise prices on two vaccines - shingles vaccine Shingrix and diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine Pediarix - by 7% and 8.6%, respectively, 3 Axis said.

Teva Pharmaceuticals Inc hiked prices on 15 drugs, including Auteo, which treats rare neurological disorders, and asthma steroid Qvar, which together grossed more than \$650 million in sales in 2019 and saw price hikes of between 5% and 6%. Teva hiked prices for some drugs, including muscle relaxant Amrix and narcolepsy treatment Nuvigil, as much as 9.4%.

More price hikes are expected



to be announced on Friday and in early January.

In 2020, drugmakers raised prices on more than 860 drugs by around 5%, on average, according to 3 Axis. Drug price increases have slowed substantially since 2015, both in terms of the size of the hikes and the number of drugs affected.

The increases come as pharmaceutical companies like Pfizer are playing hero by developing vaccines for Covid-19 in record time. The hikes could help make up for lost revenue as doctors visits and new prescriptions plummeted during the global lockdown.

Pfizer plans to raise prices on more than 60 drugs by between 0.5 % and 5%. Those include roughly 5% increases on some of its top sellers like rheumatoid arthritis treatment Xeljanz and cancer drugs Ibrance and Inlyta.

Pfizer said it had adjusted the list prices of its drugs by around 1.3% across all products in its portfolio, in line with inflation.

"This modest increase is necessary to support investments that allow us

to continue to discover new medicines and deliver those breakthroughs to the patients who need them," spokeswoman Amy Rose said in a statement, pointing in particular to the Covid-19 vaccine the company developed with Germany's BioNTech SE.

It said that its net prices, which back out rebates to pharmacy benefit managers and other discounts, have actually fallen for the last 3 years. France's Sanofi plans to increase prices on a number of vaccines 5% or less and will announce more price increases later in January, spokesperson Ashleigh Koss said.

None of the company's price increases will be above the expected growth rate of US health spending of 5.1%, she said.

Slashing US prescription drug prices - which are among the highest in the world - was a focus of US President Donald Trump, after making it a core pledge of his 2016 campaign. He issued several executive orders in late 2020 meant to cut prices, but their impact could be limited by legal challenges and other problems.

Winter Carnival At Pahalgam Draws Crowds

PAHALGAM: As part of New Year celebrations, world famous tourist spot Pahalgam reverberated with music, art and other colourful activities which saw participation of a large number of tourists.

The event was organised by the Department of Tourism and JK Tourism Development Corporation jointly.

CEO, Pahalgam Development Authority, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani was the Chief guest on the occasion while Additional Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag, Ghulam Hassan Sheikh, officers of Tourism Department, SDM, Pahalgam and other officers besides representatives of hotels, guest houses and restaurants were also present on the occasion.

In his remarks, the CEO, PDA, welcomed the tourists staying at the tourist destination while hoping they would find their stay memorable. He assured all support and assistance to the tourists on the part of administration.

Hundreds of tourists who are enjoying the winter stay at Pahalgam attended the event.

Famed artists including singer Shafi Sopori and his group of artists enthralled the audience with some popular numbers and acting skills. Anchors and comperes of Red FM also kept the audience glued through their skilful conduct of the programme. Later a cracker show was also held in which a number of tourists participated.

The world famous tourist destination, Pahalgam is witnessing a heavy footfall of tourists these days.

It may be recalled here that immediately after the COVID unlock process was started in J&K, the Tourism Department has taken a series of steps and held a number of event for the revival of tourism which included a recent two day Pahalgam festival and other events which has led to a steady increase in the tourist inflows.

GST Collections Reach Rs 1.5 lakh Crore In December, An All-Time High

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

GST collections touched a record high of over Rs 1.15 lakh crore in December, reflecting festive demand and reflationary economy.

The gross GST revenue collected in the month of December 2020 is Rs 1,15,174 crore and is the highest since the introduction of Goods and Services Tax from July 1, 2017, the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

"This is the highest growth in monthly revenues for the last 21 months. This has been due to combined effect of the rapid economic recovery post-pandemic and the nation-wide drive

against GST evaders and fake bills along with many systemic changes introduced recently, which have led to improved compliance," the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

The total number of GSTR-3B Returns filed for the month of November up to 31st December 2020 is 87 lakh.

During the month, revenues from import of goods were 27 per cent higher and the revenues from domestic transaction (including import of services) are 8 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

NEWS MAKERS

Vaccine, COVID Situation, Geopolitical Trends, Budget To Be Major Drivers For Indian Equities In 2021'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: The global COVID-19 situation, the rollout of vaccines, geopolitical trends, Union Budget and economic recovery would be the major factors driving investor sentiments in 2021 after a tumultuous year which saw both 'the worst of times and the best of times' for the stock market, said analysts.

What a year 2020 turned out to be! From witnessing gigantic losses to record-shattering gains, investors went on a roller-coaster ride amid the coronavirus pandemic and massive stimulus measures.

Markets closed last year with remarkable gains of around 16 per cent, but will the winning ways continue in 2021 as well?

According to Hemant Kanawala,

Head - Equity, Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance, "If 2020 was a year of COVID infection, lockdown and recession, 2021 will be a year of vaccination, reopening and recovery." Analysts are optimistic about the road ahead for the equity market but added that the quantum of rising would depend on multiple factors.

Markets may see profit-taking ahead followed by consolidation initially but analysts expect the prevailing uptrend to continue in 2021 as long as there is no resurgence of COVID-19 cases and consequent lockdown.

Another important factor would be the geopolitical situation with a new US president set to take charge, they added.

Dalal Street wrapped up 2020 on a bullish note, with the Sensex

gaining 15.7 per cent during the year marked with panic selling as well as record-breaking peaks.

"Markets have been continuously making newer highs led by strong liquidity flow, supportive global cues, positive news on the progress of COVID vaccines and US stimulus announcement. However, we feel some consolidation at the start cannot be ruled out, citing stretched valuations across the board.

"Nonetheless, we would see a decent performance in the markets, given overwhelming liquidity support from central banks, which is expected to continue in 2021 as well. On the domestic front, we believe improving India's fiscal position and NPA situation would boost sentiments. Besides, the Union Budget and earnings are crucial events



for investors..." said Ajit Mishra, VP Research, Religare Broking.

Considering the present scenario,

Sensex and Nifty have the potential to test 48,000-plus and 14,500-plus zones this year, he added.

Mishra added that markets are trading at expensive valuations after the phenomenal recovery in the last nine months, so there could be profit-taking ahead followed by consolidation initially and earnings recovery would decide the future course of equities.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said, "Despite the havoc created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy is expected to recover in 2021 giving a boost to the equity markets in addition to upgrades in corporate earnings."

"We expect Sensex to touch 51,500 level, while Nifty is expected to cross 15,100 mark due to enough liquidity and better than

expected recovery in businesses," said Vinit Bolinjar, Head of Research, Ventura Securities.

According to analysts, the prospect of vaccines, additional stimulus package by developed countries and gradual recovery in the global economy will drive the domestic market.

"CY21 will be marked with hopes of the early rollout of COVID-19 vaccine, normalisation of activities and unperturbed growth recovery. We expect CY21/FY22 to be a better year with likely strong recovery in both the economy and earnings," said Jaideep Hansraj, MD & CEO, Kotak Securities.

Going ahead, the key driver for markets would be a revival in earnings to sustain these premium valuations, Mishra said, adding that the government has the opportunity to set the roadmap for sustained growth

in the Union Budget early this year.

"Improvement in trade relations between India and the US under the new administration can play a critical role in expediting the recovery," Mishra added.

Vaccine optimism and liquidity supporting measures infused life into the equity market which had faced turbulent trading sessions in March due to concerns related to the pandemic and its impact on the economy.

March proved to be dreadful for Dalal Street, with the Sensex plunging a massive 8,828.8 points or 23 per cent during the month.

"As long as we don't have a resurgence of COVID and consequent lockdown, the situation should improve quickly and materially," Bolinjar added.

Study suggests link between word choices and extraverts



A study by a team of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) psychologists has found a link between extraverts and their word choices. The finding highlights the need for stronger linguistic indicators to be developed for use in on-line personality prediction tools, which are being rapidly adopted by companies to improve digital marketing strategies. Today, marketing companies use predictive algorithms to help them forecast what consumers want based on their online behaviours. Companies are also keen to leverage data and machine learning to understand the psychological aspects of consumer behaviour, which cannot be observed directly but can provide valuable insights about how to improve targeted advertising. For example, an ‘extravert consumer’ might be attracted to marketing messages that match their personality, and retail brands could then choose to target such consumers by using more extraverted and creative language to advertise their products. However, personality prediction tools available today that are used by marketing firms are not entirely accurate due to a lack of theoretically sound designs. Principal investigator of the study, Associate Professor Lin Qiu from the Psychology programme at the NTU School of Social Sciences said, “Current machine learning algorithms for personality prediction can seem like a black box -- there are many linguistic

indicators that can be included in their design, but many of them are dependent on the type of computer application used. “This may lead to biases and overfitting, an error affecting the performance of the machine learning algorithms. This begs the question -- how should we create robust and accurate personality predictions?” The study found a correlation between extraverts and their tendency to use certain categories of words. The results showed a small strength of the relationship between extraversion and the use of “positive emotion words” and “social process words.” Positive emotion words are defined by psychologists -- using text analysis tools -- as words that describe a pleasant emotional state, such as ‘love’, ‘happy’, or ‘blessed’, or that indicate positivity or optimism, such as ‘beautiful’ or ‘nice’. Social process words include words containing personal pronouns except ‘I’, and words showing social intentions, such as ‘meet’, ‘share’ and ‘talk’. “This is the first time a relationship has been established between extraverts and their tendency to use the two categories of words. As it is a small correlation, we believe that stronger linguistic indicators are needed to improve machine learning approaches, amid rising interest in such tools in consumer marketing,” Assoc Prof Qiu said. The NTU team said the findings, which was published in the Journal of Research in Personality in December 2020, can provide marketers with

well-founded linguistic predictors for the design of machine learning algorithms, improving the performance of software tools for personality prediction. How the study was conducted Previous individual studies reviewed by the NTU team have shown that extraversion, or the general tendency to experience positive emotions and enjoy social interactions, is related to the use of words described by psychologists as “positive emotion” or “social process” words. But the strength of this reported relationship has varied substantially between the different studies exploring it. To establish the effectiveness of such linguistic predictors, the NTU team reviewed 37 studies looking at the same topic to conduct a meta-analysis. Extraversion was determined using internationally recognised personality type questionnaires. Moving forward, the NTU research team will investigate the relationship between extraversion and other word categories. While machine learning and predictive analytics can provide companies and marketers with an added advantage in their business strategies, more thought must be put into the design of such analytical models, the NTU research team said. They hope their work will provide clarity on the types of words that can help guide the development of more accurate machine learning tools for personality prediction. Agencies

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER(R&B) DIVISION RAJOURI

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No: 47 of 2020-21 Dated:- 29-12-2020 (E-tendering)

For and on behalf of the President of India, e-tenders are invited on item rate/ %age basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works: -

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs)	Earnest Money/ Bid Security (in Rs)	Time of completion	Time & Date of Opening of tender (Technical Bid)	Class of Contractor
1	Construction of following works under 14FC Rajouri are as under : i) Construction of Shamsan Ghat at Allied work etc ward NO 06 Rajouri ii) Construction of lane drain from house of Sham Lal vaid UEED Ward No 6 Rajouri. iii) Construction of lane / drain with tile flooring and P/wall from main road Jawahar Nagar to House of Kundan Kak Sharma behing graveyard Ward No 06 iv) construction of concrete pillar and iron and tiles floorin backside Sanjeev Staionary Boys Middle School Ashram wali GAlI Ward No 06 v) Construction of lane drain with interlocking tile at Jawahar Nagar Kidzee School to Mela Ram Ward No 5 Rajouri.	20.13	600/-	40,260/-	02 Months	On or after 16-01-2021 (1100 hours) in the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Rajouri	A,B&C
2	Construction of one No additional Class room with 7 wide verandah at Middle School Gundi	16.91	600/-	33,820/-	06 Month	--do---	A,B&C
3	Construction of following works under My Town My Pride are as under" i) Construction of lane/ Drain with Tile flooring shop of Bittu Shah to Attam Shah shop Ward No 04 Rajouri. ii) Construction of Interlocking tile from Jawahar Nagar upto Guru Ravi Dass Mandir at Ward No 5 MC Rajouri iii) Construction of drain with slab at Mohalla Krishan Nagar near House of Raju Seghal & Vinod Sharma & others Ward No 6 MC Rajouri	16.07	600/-	32,140/-	02 Month	--do---	A,B&C
4	Development of Bus Stand at Bella Colony Rajouri (for Rajouri-Darhal Thannamandi Bound)	10.28	600/-	20,560/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
5	Construction of following works under My Town My Pride are as under" i) Balance work fixing of tiles from H/o Haji Qayoom to Mohd Bashir main road and other ongo- ing works ward No 2. ii) Construction of lane/ drain with drain from main road to H/o Shafeeq Ahmed to and H/o Mohd Khan and others and H/o Mohd Shafiq to lad of Haji Mushtaq Ahmed Dar and others ward No 3 iii) Construction of P/wall opp H/o Shafeeq Ahmed Darto near land of Mukhtar Ahmed Zari(Driver Armed) back side of Gareeb Nawaz Jamma Masjid and others ward No 03 MC Rajouri	10.12	600/-	20,240/-	02 Months	--do---	A,B,C&D
6	Construction of road from BGSB university road Dhanidhar to Mohalla Zabib Iqbal and others ward NO 16 My Town My Pride	10.00	600/-	20000/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
7	Construction of following works under Town Drainage i) Construction of deep drain with slab and Iron Jungla at Panja Chowk Ward No 5 MC Rajouri under Town drainage. ii) Construction of Deep drain near Pahari Hostel from Shiv Mandir Dhanidhar to Onward Under Town drainage.	7.00	600/-	14000/-	02 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
8	Construction of following works under My Town My Pride are as under" i) Construction of link road to H/o of Wakeel Ahmed Bhat ward No 17 MC Rajouri ii) Road from Dr. Javed House to Main road Ward No 17 MC Rajouri iii) Road work of Sadeeq Chib house of Maqbool Hussain Ward No 17 MC Rajouri	5.00	600/-	10000/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
9	Construction of following works under My Town My Pride are as under" i) Construction of Nallah from H/o Tufail Hussain to river side ward No 7 MC Rajouri. ii) Construction of P/wall of Grave Yard NHO Mohd Rafiq & back side of Water collar ward No 07 MC Rajouri	5.00	600/-	10000/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
10	Construction of P/wall with plaster at Shamsan Ghat Ward No 11 MC Rajouri My Town My Pride	4.00	600/-	8000/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
11	Construction of following works under 14FC Rajouri are as under : i) Construction of P/wall R/wall Filling of Grave Yard Chandi marh Wala Opposite Masjid Sharief Usman Ghani Ward No 2 ii) Construction of deep drain from H/o Naseer Guard to Hav Malik and others Via H/o Mirza Arshid W.No 2	4.40	600/-	8800/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
12	Construction of following works under My Town My Pride are as under" i) Construction of from and placing 1.5 feet diameter cement pipes starting from back sides of house of Sh Hazari Lal to H/o Sh Om Parkash Sharma Opposite Ziarat W.No 8. ii) Construction of drain from house of Bazar Dar to House of Maqbool Dar and lying tiles on same lane between two houses Ward NO 8 M.C Rajouri	4.00	600/-	8000/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
13	Construction of following works under My Town My Pride are as under" i) Construction of Street with tile from Upper Bus Stand lane to Lower Mohalla Ward No 9 M.C Rajouri. ii) Renovation of street light from Super Gas to Talib Masjid include Shiv Ram house ward No 09 MC Rajouri.	4.00	600/-	8000/-	01 Month	--do---	A,B,C&D
14	Balance work for construction of lane and central drain from Transformer to house of Subash Chander via Kartar singh New Housing colony in ward No 6 Rajouri MC Rajouri.	1.06	600/-	2120/-	01 Month	--do---	D

1. Date of Issue of Tender Notice

2. Period of downloading of bidding documents

3. Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting

4. Bid submission Start Date

5. Bid Submission End Date

6. Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)

7. Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (Online)

30-12-2020

From 31-12-2020 11.00 A.M to 15-01-2021 up to 4.00 P.M.

09-01-2021 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD R&B Division Rajouri

31-12-2020 from 11.00 A.M

15-01-2021 up to 4.00 P.M

16-01-2021 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD R&B Division Rajouri

To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

Note: *Cost of Bidding Document to be the tender inviting authority. The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the Departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule:
1. Bidders can resubmit/withdraw the bids as specified.
2. The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
a) The earnest money shall be forfeited, if- -ny bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
b) Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within a specified time period issue of letter of intent.
c) In case the contractor fails to execute the agreement within 28 days after the fixation of the contract.

No : 9723-52
Dated : 29-10-2020

DIPK-11188/20

Sd/-
(Er. Mohd Zubair)
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division
Rajouri

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUIVE ENGINEER
SPL SUB DIV. TANGDAR

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT No 60 SSD Tangdar of 2020-21 e-tendering DATED: 31/12/2020

For and on behalf of the Lt.Governor, J&K UT e-tenders (in Single Cover System) are invited on percentage % basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time of Completion In days	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
01	Constt of Bhatpora Kursi Chota road bwo providing laying WBM G-I G-II in km 2 nd and 3 rd and 4 th constt of crate protection work CC drain at required spots.	54.25	1600/-	108500/-	30days	13/01/2021	AAY	NABARD

Position of AAA/TS :Approved

Position of funds :committed

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

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	31/12/2020
02.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 01/01/2021 (10.00P.M)
03.	Bid submission start date	02/01/2021 from (10.00A.M)
04.	Bid submission end date	12/01/2021 upto (04.00P.M)
05.	Date & time of opening Bids (on line)	13/01/2021 at (11.00A.M) in the Office of the Executive Engineer Spl Sub Div Tangdar

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of E Challan /Treasury receipt in favour of Executive Engineer Spl Sub Div Tangdar (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer Spl Sub Div Tangdar(Tender receiving authority).

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on web Site www.jketenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Executive Engineer Spl Sub Div Tangdar (Tender receiving authority)

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

No: 3544-52
Dt:31/12/2020

Executive Engineer
Spl Sub Div Tangdar

DIPK-11211/20

SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION

EOI 01 OF 2020-21

Notice inviting Expression of Interest (Eoi)

The Executive Engineer, Left River Works Division, Srinagar Municipal Corporation on behalf of Srinagar Municipal Corpora- tion invites online Expression of Interest from the reputed registered consultant/agency/company/architect to submit technical pro- posal for Preparation of DPR for Developmental Projects/ Works at Shariefabad, Durbal, Bemina Srinagar. Interested Agencies may download the complete Request for Proposal (RFP) document from the website i.e. http://www.jktenders.gov. in from 26/12/2020. The eligible bidders have to submit their bids online at e-tendering portal i.e. http://www.jktenders.gov.in.

KEY DATES AND VITAL INFORMATION:

S.No.	Description	Important Information
1.	Date of online publication	26-12-2020
2.	Downloading of e-tender documents	27.12.2020 from 11:00 AM.
3.	Pre-Bid Meeting	04.01.2021 at 02:00 PM
4.	Last Date of submission of e- tender	15.01.2021- 04:00 PM
5.	Date of opening of Bids	16.01.2021 at 2:00 PM in the Office of Executive Engineer, LRWD, SMC Or any other date as conven- ient to opening authority
6.	Completion Period of the Project	6 Months
7.	RFP Document Fee	Rs. 1000/- (Rupees One Thousand only) in the shape Demand Draft in favor of Chief Accounts Officer SMC, payable at Srinagar.
8.	Amount of EMD	Rs. 15,000/- (Rupees Fifteen Thousand only) CDR/ FDR pledged to Execu- tive Engineer, Left River Works Division, SMC.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

The consultants are required to submit and upload scanned copies of DDs, EMD and other documents as mentioned in detailed Expres- sion of Interest online as per above schedule. The Financial Bid (BOQ) has to be uploaded online also. All amendments, time extension, clarifications etc. will be uploaded on the website only and will not be published in newspapers. The bidders should visit regularly the website to keep themselves updated. The Consultant (s) shall solely responsible for any cost they may incur for site visit, transport, fares, postage and telephones etc. in the process of submission of proposal. The Srinagar Municipal Corporation reserves the right at its absolute discretion to accept or reject any of the Eoi without assigning any reason(s). If the Bidders require any further information they may contact Executive Engineer, Left River Works Division, Srinagar Municipal Cor- poration. NO.SMC/EELRWD/4442-51 DATED:26-12-2020

DIPK-NB-4914/20

Executive Engineer
Left River Works Division
Srinagar Municipal Corporation.



NEW YEAR BEGINS WITH MULTIPLE Snow Racing Events At GULMARG



THE THRILLING SNOW SPORTS races were organized in Snow Skiing, Snow Boarding, Snow Sludge, ATV, Snow Mobile, Snow Tube and Snow Cycling in which hundreds of local youth enthusiastically participated.

GULMARG: On the first day of the New Year-2021, the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir on Friday organized several colorful and entertaining Snow based events at Gulmarg amidst hundreds of Tourists and local youth enjoying the Sports bonanza.

Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, P K Pole who was the Chief Guest on the occasion

flagged off the seven races.

The thrilling Snow Sports races were organized in Snow Skiing, Snow Boarding, Snow Sludge, ATV, Snow Mobile, Snow Tube and Snow Cycling in which hundreds of local youth enthusiastically participated.

Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla, Dr G N Itoo, Director Tourism, Kashmir, Nisar Ahmad Wani, CEO,

GDA, Inam-ul-Haq, Joint Director Tourism, Tabassum Kamili, Deputy Director, Publicity / Recreation, Ideel Saleem and Assistant Director, Gulmarg, Dr Javid-ur-Rehman were also present.

Hundreds of Tourists who are presently in Gulmarg to enjoy their holidays in the Winter wonderland were happily seen cheering the participants.

Later, in the day, certificates and prizes were distributed by the Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir among the winners across all the seven races. Certificates were also distributed among the participants of the first batch of the Youth who successfully completed their 7-Day Introductory Ski Course being Sponsored by the Tourism Department.

Speaking on the occasion, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir congratulated the Tourism Department for organising Cultural activities and Snow based Sports events at Gulmarg, which he said, not only entertain the Tourists presently in Kashmir but also prove beneficial to nurture local talent giving them confidence to compete in competitive events in

future like the upcoming Khelo India Winter Games being held in Gulmarg this winter. He also prayed for a COVID free, peaceful and good tourism year ahead in Jammu and Kashmir.

On New Year's Eve, as part of the New Year Celebrations, Colorful and gala entertaining events were organized by Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir on

Thursday evening at Gulmarg and Pahalgam, which despite sub-zero temperatures saw participation of thousands of Tourists and local youth seen enjoying and fully immersed in the cultural extravaganza including comedy shows by famous Kashmiri comedian, Nazir Josh and Sufi Songs by budding young singers and much more.

Natarajan Replaces Umesh, Rohit Sharma Named Vice Captain For Last 2 Australia Tests



Press Trust of India

MELBOURNE - Continuing his remarkable rise in international cricket, Tamil Nadu's yorker sensation Thangarasu Natarajan on Friday replaced injured pacer Umesh Yadav in the Indian Test team for the remaining two games against Australia.

"Umesh Yadav sustained a strain in his left calf muscle on Day 3 of the second Border-Gavaskar Test in Melbourne... The fast bowler will not recover completely ahead of the remaining two Test matches and has been ruled out of the series," BCCI Secretary Jay Shah stated in a media release.

The 29-year-old Natarajan had started off as a net bowler during the series and then subsequently made it to the T20 and ODI squads. He snared eight wickets (two ODI and six T20) during his four limited-overs appearances in

national colours.

Meanwhile opener and limited-overs vice-captain Rohit Sharma has been named as the vice-captain of team. The prolific batsman joined his teammates on Wednesday after completing his 14-day quarantine period. He will take over the reins from Cheteshwar Pujara.

Ajinkya Rahane continues to lead the Test side in the absence of regular skipper Virat Kohli, who is on a paternity leave.

The series is locked 1-1 right now with the third Test starting in Sydney from January 7.

Team India Test squad: Ajinkya Rahane (Captain), Rohit Sharma (vice-captain), Mayank Agarwal, Prithvi Shaw, KL Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Hanuma Vihari, Shubman Gill, Wriddhiman Saha (wk), Rishabh Pant (wk), Jasprit Bumrah, Navdeep Saini, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, R. Ashwin, Md. Siraj, Shardul Thakur, T Natarajan.

Man United's Cavani Gets 3 Game Ban For Offensive Social Media Post

Press Trust of India

MANCHESTER - Manchester United's Uruguain striker Edinson Cavani was banned for three games by the English Football Association (FA) after using a Spanish term for Black people in a social media post, which he said was intended as an affectionate greeting.

Cavani has also been fined 100,000 pounds (USD 136,500) and ordered to complete face-to-face education after admitting to breaching the FA's rules.

The FA said the comment was "insulting, abusive, improper and brought the game into disrepute" and also was an "aggravated breach" because it "included reference, whether express or implied, to colour and/or race and/or ethnic origin."

The message was posted by the Uruguayan on Instagram after he



scored twice in United's 3-2 victory at Southampton in October in the Premier League.

"While it is clear that context and intent are key factors, we note that the independent regulatory Commission was required to impose a minimum three game suspension,"

United said in a statement.

"The club trusts that the independent Regulatory Commission will make it clear in its written reasons that Edinson Cavani is not a racist, nor was there any racist intent in relation to his post."

The former Paris Saint-Germain player, who joined United as a free agent in October, has already issued an apology.

"Edinson Cavani wasn't aware that his words could have been misconstrued and he sincerely apologized for the post and to anyone who was offended," United said.

"Despite his honest belief that he was simply sending an affectionate thank you in response to a congratulatory message from a close friend, he chose not to contest the charge out of respect for, and solidarity with, The FA and the fight against racism in football."

Neil Wagner Replaced By Matt Henry For NZ's Second Test Against Pak

Press Trust of India

CHRISTCHURCH - New Zealand's fast bowler Matt Henry was on Friday named as replacement for the injured left-arm pacer Neil Wagner in their squad for Sunday's second Test against Pakistan.

Wagner was struck by a Pakistan speedster Shaheen Afridi yorker while batting on the second day of the first Test, sustaining undisplaced fractures in both the fourth

and fifth toes of his right foot.

Wagner's recovery is expected to be approximately six weeks, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said in a statement.

Coach Gary Stead said Henry brings Test experience and local knowledge to the squad. "Matt has been in good form with the ball having recently taken 6-53 for New Zealand A against the Pakistan Shaheens (A side) in December," Stead said. "We're still a couple of days out from the Test, so need to take a look at the surface

while also assessing our options for best-possible team make-up," he added. New Zealand won the first Test by 101 runs to take 1-0 lead in the two-match series. A series win over Pakistan would make the Kiwi's No. 1 Test team for the first time.

Squad: Kane Williamson (c), Tom Blundell, Trent Boult, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Mitchell Santner, Tim Southee, Ross Taylor, BJ Watling (wk), Will Young.

Liverpool Defender Joel Matip Out For 3 Weeks With Muscle Injury



Press Trust of India

LIVERPOOL - Liverpool coach Jurgen Klopp expects defender Joel Matip to miss the Premier League leader's next three matches because of an adductor strain.

The Cameroon player will likely be out of action for about three weeks after straining a muscle during Sunday's 1-1 draw against West Bromwich Albion, Klopp said late Wednesday.

The center-back sat out Wednesday's 0-0 draw at Newcastle United, with Nathaniel Phillips starting in his place.

"The normal stuff with these kind of injuries, (he will be out

for) around about three weeks," Klopp said in his post-game press conference.

Liverpool has now won only two of eight league away games this season but still tops the table.

Matip's absence is a tough blow for the Reds, who were already without injured defender Virgil van Dijk.

Liverpool travels to Southampton on Monday in the Premier League then plays at Aston Villa in the FA Cup on Jan. 8.

Matip is also expected to miss the clash with bitter rival and second-placed Manchester United at Anfield on January 17.

NEWS MAKERS

Slovakian Tennis Player Dagmara Baskova Banned For Match Fixing

Agencies

Slovakian tennis player Dagmara Baskova was banned for 12 years on Thursday for match-fixing offenses, the Tennis Integrity Unit said.

Baskova admitted to charges of five incidents of match fixing in 2017, the TIU said. She was also fined \$40,000 with all but \$1,000 suspended and payable within 90 days.

"Baskova admitted the charges and Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer Ian Mill QC ruled that she should be prohibited from playing in or at-



tending any tennis event authorised or sanctioned by the governing bodies of tennis for a period of 12 years," TIU said in an official statement.

Baskova had a career-high WTA ranking of 1,117 in singles and 777 in doubles.

She has since retired from the sport, the TIU said.

Bumrah Has Mastered The Art Of Fast Bowling Pakistanis Used To Have: Akhtar

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI - Jasprit Bumrah is the "smartest fast bowler" in contemporary cricket who has learnt the art of deceiving rival batsmen in air, something that was the secret of success for Pakistani greats, said Shoaib Akhtar.

One of the fastest bowlers to have ever played the game, Akhtar is enamoured by Bumrah's skill-sets and his ability to outwit a batsman in a mere "five seconds" from an ungainly run-up which isn't exactly a critic's delight.

"He (Bumrah) is probably India's first fast bowler, who checks the wind speed and wind direction rather than how much grass has been left on the



track. This thing used to be the art of Pakistanis, we used to know how you could play with the wind," Akhtar said on YouTube channel "Sports Today".

He then cited example of how the two Ws and him used

to read the wind speeds during their heydays.

"We used to actually (do that), me, Wasim bhai and Waqar bhai, we used to note the wind speed and direction, look the wind is blowing from that corridor, okay I might get reverse from that end," he said.

"We knew mechanics and aero dynamics of fast bowling, how much swing and at what time of the day. This is my assumption that Bumrah knows these sort of things which I hardly think other fast bowlers know these sort of things," Akhtar added.

For Akhtar, post Mohammed Asif and Mohammed Aamir, Bumrah is the "smartest operator" in terms of intelligence.

Sports Council's J&K Premier League Begins In Anantnag

Observer News Service

Anantnag - The Jammu and Kashmir Sports Council on Friday started the JK Premier League in Anantnag in collaboration with various sports associations.

In an official statement, the Sports Council said that the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, K.K.Sidha was the Chief Guest at the inaugural ceremony of the league. The event was also attended by DYSSO Anantnag, officials of sports council, members of civil society and general public.

The league will feature sports including volleyball, football, kabaddi and hockey. With six teams featuring in each category.



On the occasion, DC Anantnag Sidha also interacted with the players and directed the DYSSO to distribute shoes among them.

According to the statement, the DC reiterated his commitment for the upliftment of sports infrastructure in the district and also assured full support to the youth for realisation of their talent in various sport activities.

Cab Knocks Elderly To Death While Overtaking Other

PATTAN: A 52-yr old man died after he was hit by a vehicle near Kalsari area of Pattan in north Kashmir Baramulla on Friday. The elderly man, who was walking on road, was hit by one of the two overtaking cabs, resulting in his on spot death. He identified the deceased as Bashir Ahmad Lone son of Ghulam Ahmad Lone, a resident of Khargam Kreeri. The official said that police have taken the cognizance and further investigations have been taken up.

Scientists develop new method for visualizing breath to evaluate face masks

The new method helps evaluate the effectiveness of face masks



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

A new method for visualising the air exhaled while someone is speaking or singing could shed light on how diseases such as COVID-19 spread, and help evaluate the effectiveness of face masks, according to a study.

The novel system, described in the journal Applied Optics, images temperature differences between exhaled breath and the surrounding air to estimate how far the breath travels before being dispersed into the surrounding air.

According to study author Thomas Moore from Rollins College in the US, the new technique can also be used to study the details of how breath flows from the mouth while speaking or singing, which could be useful for music instruction and speech therapy.

Originally developed to study the flow of air through musical instruments such as organ pipes, Moore said he began imaging the breath of people speaking and singing.

"I realized that by scaling up

my existing system, I could likely determine how far the breath extends and how effective masks may be in limiting the extent of the breath," he added.

While most existing approaches used to image exhaled breath require expensive equipment and can image only a relatively small area, Moore said the new design uses common commercially available optical components to overcome these limitations.

The new technique, Moore explained, is based on the fact that the speed of light changes depending on the temperature of air it passes through.

As breath is warmer than the surrounding air, the light transmitted through the exhaled air arrives at the camera slightly sooner than light that did not pass through it, which he said can be used to create images of the air.

According to Moore, the technique can reveal new information that may affect how we approach distancing and masking requirements, especially when outdoors.



The pandemic has caused an economic catastrophe for many musicians, and any information we can give them that will help them get back to work is important"

Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Shows 94.1 Per Cent Efficacy In Trial: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Results from the primary analysis of the ongoing phase 3 clinical trial of US biotechnology company Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine have revealed 94.1 per cent efficacy of the therapeutic in preventing symptomatic infections and severe illness, according to a peer-reviewed study.

The study, published on Wednesday in The New England Journal of Medicine, found that among over 30,000 participants randomised to receive the vaccine or a placebo, 11 in the vaccine group developed symptomatic COVID-19 compared to 185 participants who received the placebo. The researchers said this demonstrates 94.1 per cent efficacy in preventing symptomatic COVID-19, adding that cases of severe disease occurred only in participants who received the placebo.

"Our work continues. Over the next months, we'll have increasing amounts of data to better define how this vaccine works, but the results so far show a 94.1 per cent efficacy. These numbers are compelling," said Lindsey Baden, an infectious diseases specialist at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in the US where the trial took place.

"And, importantly, the data suggest

protection from severe illness, indicating that the vaccine could have an impact on preventing hospitalisations and deaths, at least in the first several months post-vaccination," said Baden, co-principal investigator for the study,



and lead author of the paper.

The study enrolled 30,420 adult participants at 99 sites in the US, including over 600 participants enrolled at the Brigham.

Eligible participants were 18 years old or more with no known history of SARS-CoV-2

infection, and whose locations or circumstances put them at appreciable risk of the infection and high risk of severe COVID-19, the researchers said. They noted that the race and ethnicity proportion of the trial was 79

per cent white, 10 per cent Black or African American, and 20 per cent Hispanic or Latino participants.

The participants received their first injection between July 27 and October 23, followed by a second shot 28 days later. Each jab, given intramuscularly, had a volume of 0.5 millilitres (mL), containing 100 micrograms (g) of mRNA-1273 vaccine or saline placebo. In the placebo group, 185 participants developed symptomatic COVID-19 illness whereas in the vaccine group, only 11 participants did.

In secondary analyses, the vaccine's efficacy was similar across groups of key interest, including those who already had antibodies against SARS-CoV-2 at the time of enrolment, and among those who were 65 years of age or older, the researchers said.

Thirty participants had severe COVID-19 -- all in the placebo group, they said. They were closely monitored for adverse events in the weeks following their injection.

The researchers said overall, reactions to the vaccine were mild -- about half of recipients experienced fatigue, muscle aches, joint pain and headaches, more so after the second dose. Baden said while these results are encouraging, they are limited by the short duration of follow-up so far. "Longer term data from the ongoing study may allow us to more carefully evaluate the vaccine's efficacy among different groups, determine the impact on asymptomatic infection, understand when immunity wanes, and determine whether vaccines affect infectiousness," she added.

How scientists studied coughs to model COVID-19 spread

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck the world, IIT-Bombay Professor Rajneesh Bhardwaj was studying how droplets evaporated for applications in spray cooling and inkjet printing, and his collaborator Amit Agarwal was working on point-of-care medical devices and electronic cooling.

But once it became clear that the pandemic was mainly spreading through cough and sneeze aerosols from infected individuals, the duo began applying their knowledge to understand the evaporation of respiratory droplets from surfaces and the spread of cough clouds.

"Our plans were to continue in the domain of thermal and fluid engineering. However, the pandemic came as an opportunity to diversify and explore other research areas. We thought of extending and applying our knowledge to several unanswered questions in the context of COVID-19," Agrawal, Institute Chair Professor from the Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT-Bombay, told PTL.

Bhardwaj and Agrawal, both experts in the field of fluid mechanics, said their understanding of the motion of fluids helped them model how the novel coronavirus spread.

"Air and water are the most common fluids, and also the carrier of most viruses and bacteria, it is not that surprising that the subject is playing an important role in understanding and managing the current pandemic," Bhardwaj told PTL.

Numerous studies, over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, applied principles of fluid mechanics to provide scores of important insights about the distance over which different size respiratory droplets travel, the safe distance between people, and the

efficacy of various types of masks in reducing the transfer of contaminated droplets.

Scientists also probed into the process by which larger droplets underwent evaporation and subsequently precipitation to turn into microdroplets called aerosols.

"During this process, big droplets settle on the ground after a short distance in flight while the smaller ones remain airborne for a longer period forming aerosols," explained Saptarshi Basu, from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

"In short, the entire story of droplets leading to infections is a fluid dynamics problem," Basu, Chair Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, told PTL.

Two studies by Basu and his team, both published in the journal Physics of Fluids, applied fluid dynamics experiments to show how the respiratory droplets dried and formed aerosols, and how virus particles are distributed within them.

According to the IISc scientist, factors such as people's mask wearing behaviour, social distancing, population density, and movement of individuals contribute significantly to the infection rate and severity in a region.

However, he believes some of the primary contributors include how respiratory droplets evaporate after ejection, how far they travel, and how they disperse.

"All the above control how droplets can infect other people and norms like safe distance for social distancing," said Basu, who has been studying the physics of droplets in applications ranging from 3D printing, surface patterning, combustion, and biomedical engineering.

As economies slowly opened across the world post lockdowns, and travel restrictions eased, scientists and engineers also



applied fluid mechanics to shed light on the indoor spread of the coronavirus.

Scientists, led by Verghese Mathai from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, US, performed computer simulations to understand the aerosol spread of the coronavirus inside car cabins.

"I had gained industrial experience with this specific type of computational fluid dynamics simulations while I was in India, and my suggestion to use these simulations was primarily motivated by the fact that we could not perform experiments due to the stay-at-home orders, and the pandemic situation required results with a short turnaround time," Mathai said.

The scientists could quickly apply principles used to test flows inside an aircraft engine and suggest the safest way to prevent possible transmission of COVID-19 when people travel in cars in a study published in the journal Science.

"This is an excellent example of how the pandemic made researchers revisit their complementary skills and come together to work on an important topic," Mathai said.

"So this simulation approach can be extended to trains or buses and we can answer

important questions about airflows and aerosol type of particles. We can also look into confined buildings, or long queues of people and how potentially pathogen laden airflows around them might get diluted," he said. Several studies, published in the journal Physics of Fluids, helped predict how the virus spread at different conditions, such as temperature, carbon dioxide concentration, and humidity.

"Those predictions allowed us to identify critical situations for virus transmission," explained Douglas Fontes from the University of Central Florida in the US. "As the models better represent the real phenomena, we can use them to determine better safety measures for specific conditions, people, and type of disease," Fontes told PTL.

According to Fontes, future simulations could detail the physical properties of mucus, tissue structures within respiratory systems, and how they interact with each other.

"The better our knowledge of the biological characteristics associated with respiratory events that transport diseases, the better our capacity to accurately model how disease transmission through droplet dispersion occurs," he added.

India to resume flights with UK from Jan 8, only 15 weekly flights per country: Puri

29 people have tested positive for the UK coronavirus variant in India

AGENCIES

Over a week after suspending flights between India and the UK, the civil aviation ministry is set to resume them from January 8.

"It has been decided that flights between India & UK will resume from 8 Jan 2021. Operations till 23 Jan will be restricted to 15 flights per week each for carriers of the two countries to & from Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru & Hyderabad only. DGCA India will issue the details shortly," tweeted Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

Earlier, India and the UK had about 67 flights per week. The suspension came following reports of a more infectious strain of the coronavirus that was detected in the UK, courtesy the country's expansive genome sequencing programme.

A total of 29 people have tested positive for the new UK variant of SARS-CoV-2 in India so far, the Union Health Ministry said on Friday.

These include the 25 cases which were announced till Thursday.

"All the 29 persons are in physical isolation in health facilities," an official said.

Of the 29, the mutated UK strain was detected in the samples of eight persons at the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) in New Delhi, two in the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB), Delhi, one in the National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG), Kalyani (near Kolkata), five in the National Institute of Virology in Pune, three in Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad and 10 were sequenced at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences Hospital (NIMHANS) Bengaluru.

Comprehensive contact tracing has been

initiated for co-travellers, family contacts and others, the ministry said.

The presence of the new UK variant has already been reported by Denmark, Netherlands, Australia, Italy, Sweden, France, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Canada, Japan, Lebanon and Singapore, so far.

The government of India took cognizance of the reports of virus reported from the UK and put in place a proactive and preventive strategy to detect and contain the mutant variant, the ministry said, referring to the temporary flights suspension as well as the mandatory testing of all UK-returned air passengers through RT-PCR test.

The samples of all UK returnees found positive in the RT-PCR test will be genome sequenced by a consortium of 10 government labs-INSACOG.

Further, all the international passengers who have arrived in India between December 9 to 22, if symptomatic and tested positive for COVID-19, will be subjected to genome sequencing as part of the Centre's strategy to detect the mutated UK variant in them.

Others will be followed up by the respective state and district surveillance officers and will be tested as per ICMR guidelines (even if asymptomatic) between the fifth and the tenth day, according to the Union Health Ministry's guidance document on genomic sequencing.

Further, epidemiological surveillance of the passengers, who have arrived in India since November 23 will be conducted in the community through active follow up.

The standard operating protocol for states and UTs to tackle the mutant variant of SARS-CoV-2 was issued on December 22, it added.

—With inputs from PTL

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