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The good and wise lead quite lives — Euripides

NEWS DIGEST

Magnitude 4.1 Earthquake Hits J&K

SRINAGAR: An earthquake of magnitude 4.1 on the Richter Scale was felt in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. The quake was reported at 10.01 pm with its epicentre at a depth of 93 km east of Katra, according to the National Centre of Seismology (NCS). The depth of the quake was 10 km. So far, no reports of any damage have surfaced.

Police Officer Dies Of Cardiac Arrest

SRINAGAR: A police officer died of cardiac arrest at the SMHS hospital here on Saturday. Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Amrez Ahmed Khoja, posted at Shergari Police Station was shifted to SMHS Hospital after he complained of chest pain, news agency KNT reported while quoting police sources. The police officer died in the hospital while the cause of his death is attributed to cardio-pulmonary arrest, the report said. Khoja was a resident of Ibkote village of Karnah along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kupwara district. His body has been handed over to his legal heirs for last rites.

Youth Injured In Jammu Shootout

JAMMU: A 25-year-old man was critically injured on Saturday when he was fired upon by two people who were later arrested along with a revolver here, police said. Happy Jamwal was shot at near the main chowk Paloura in the city and was taken to Government Medical College (GMC) hospital, a police officer said. Soon after the incident, the family members of the victim staged a demonstration outside the local police station at Janipur and demanded action against the culprits, alleging that they attacked Jamwal after he refused to pay them money. Police acted swiftly and arrested two of the accused and recovered a revolver from their possession, the officer said.

Load Carrier Rolls Into Jhelum, 2 Injured

SRINAGAR- Two persons were injured after a load carrier they were travelling in plunged into river Jhelum near Hajin in north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Saturday. Reports said that a Bandipora-bound Tata mobile (JK15A 5193) met with an accident after the driver purportedly lost control over the vehicle near Prang area of Hajin, according to news agency GNS. The injured have been identified as Showkat Ahmad Guroo (35) son of Abdul Raheem Guroo and Ghulam Nabi Guroo son of Ghulam Rasool Guroo, both residents of Shadipora village in Bandipora District. The injured were shifted to local PHC from where the duo was shifted to SKIMS Soura for specialized treatment. Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance of the incident and further investigation has been initiated.

MHA Awards 2 Cops For Saving Civilians

JAMMU: Two policemen received 'Jeevan Raksha Padak' awards on Saturday for saving the lives of civilians during ceasefire violations by Pakistan along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir in March 2018, an official said. Selection Grade Constable Maqsood Ahmad in Poonch district police and Follower Zakir Hussain of sixth battalion J&K Armed Police (JKAP) were awarded 'Jeevan Raksha Padak 2019' by the Union Home Ministry last year. Poonch Deputy Commissioner Rahul Yadav and Senior Superintendent of Police Ramesh Kumar Angral handed over the awards to the policemen at a function at Dak Bungalow, Poonch. ● More On P6

Beginning of the end

Covid Vaccination Drive Begins In Kashmir



A health worker being administered Covishield vaccine at SK institute of medical sciences (SKIMS) Srinagar on Saturday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

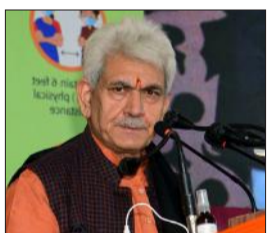
SRINAGAR: The coronavirus vaccination drive started in Kashmir on Saturday, with nearly 2,000 healthcare workers, including prominent doctors in the Valley by the end of the day, an official said.

Forty centres -- 20 each in two divisions -- across Jammu and Kashmir started the vaccination drive after Prime

Minister Narendra Modi kicked-started it across the country in the morning, the official said. A G Ahangar -- the director of the SKIMS, the premier tertiary care hospital in Srinagar -- received the first shot at the centre, State Immunisation Officer Qazi Haroon said.

About 4,000 healthcare workers will receive the shot in the first phase and 100 people each will be given shots at these centres, Haroon said. A lot of doctors, including heads of institutions, several heads of departments and chief medical officers of various districts, received the jabs to boost confidence in the vaccination process, according to Haroon. Jammu and Kashmir received on Wednesday 1.46 lakh doses of the Oxford-AstraZeneca's vaccine, manufactured in India by the Serum Institute. While 79,000 doses were received ● More On P6

A Historic Day: LG



Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Saturday cautioned people against rumour mongers spreading lies about COVID-19 vaccine even as the administration said it is fully prepared to ensure a successful inoculation drive in the union territory. The coronavirus vaccination drive started at forty centres across Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday where healthcare workers were administered jabs. The UT had received the first batch of 1,46,500 doses ● More On P6

Soz Condemns Arrest Of Mainstream Leaders

SRINAGAR: Senior Congress leader Prof. Saifuddin Soz on Saturday said that incarceration of mainstream political leaders of Kashmir by the Union Territory administration has become a 'routine'.

In a statement issued to media here, Soz said that notice may be taken of senior Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) leader Naem Akhtar who had been taken into custody months ago. Of late, Akhtar had been lodged in MLA's Hostel, Srinagar, he said adding now, when his health deteriorated, he was hospitalized for treatment.

Senior Congress leader said it is extremely deplorable that even when his health has deteriorated, he continues to be under detention. "Knowledgeable sources have confirmed ● More On P6

Soaring Air Fares

CB Tightens Noose Around Ticketing Agents

SRINAGAR: The Crime Branch of police on Saturday carried out searches at multiple locations across the city in connection with the alleged sale of air tickets on exorbitant rates by travel agents and various airlines operating in the Valley.

The sleuths of CB conducted searches at the offices of at least nine travel agents and the residence of a sales manager of a private airliner, local news agency KNT reported Saturday. The searches, the



report said, were carried out on the basis of a complaint from different travel associations and trade bodies through Director Tourism, Kashmir regarding dry selling/offline selling of bulk

GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONSTITUTE A TEAM to monitor this business so that a check on all travel agents selling tickets is done. It shall be mandatory for every travel agent to submit the list of tickets sold by him along with the transaction details."

1 Covid-19 Death Reported in 24 Hours

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A septuagenarian man from central Kashmir's Budgam district on Saturday died of coronavirus, even as the Union Territory reported 109 fresh cases of novel coronavirus, including nine travellers during the last 24 hours.

A 75-year-old man from Mazhama village of Budgam district became the latest victim of the deadly disease on Saturday, taking the fatality count to 1921 in the Union Territory, officials said.

So far 1921 people have succumbed to virus in J&K-- 1206 in the Valley and 715 in Jammu region. Srinagar district with 453 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (367), Baramulla (172), Budgam (115), Kupwara (94), Pulwama (88), Anantnag (84), Doda (64), Bandipora (61), Udhampur (57), Kulgam (54), Rajouri (55), Kathua (51), Ganderbal (46), Shopian (39), Samba (39). ● More On P6

Mercury Dips Further, Cold Wave Intensifies



Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The minimum temperature at most places in Kashmir dropped further on Saturday as the intense cold tightened its grip in the Valley, resulting

in the freezing of water supply lines and water bodies, including the famous Dal Lake, in several areas.

A thick fog also engulfed many parts of the valley, including the city, in the morning. ● More On P6

THE CITY HAD RECORDED A low of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius on Thursday, which was the coldest night in Srinagar since 1991.

Bailey Bridge Makes Highway Motorable After 6 Day Closure



Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: After remaining closed for six consecutive days, the Srinagar-Jammu highway on Saturday was thrown open for traffic after the Bailey Bridge

raised by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) made the strategic road link motorable.

"The Bridge was put to trail run at 2.45 PM and traffic was allowed to pass in a regulated manner ● More On P6

Charges Filed Against 11 'Lashkar Members'

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu police has filed a chargesheet against 11 alleged members of a Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) module that was busted last year, an official spokesperson said on Saturday.

The chargesheet against the arrested accused with nine falling from Doda district of Jammu region and one each of Baramulla and Kupwara districts of north Kashmir, was filed in the Court of 3rd Additional Sessions Judge Jammu on Friday, the spokesperson said. ● More On P6

Minor Rejig In Civil Admin, 13 Officers Shifted

Bhupinder Is New DC Baramulla, Garg To Take Charge Of Anantnag

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Saturday reshuffled civil administration by transferring as many as 13 bureaucrats, including many IAS and KAS officers "in the interest of administration" with immediate effect.

On the directions of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, the general administration department (GAD) issued an order on Saturday shifting 13 IAS and KAS officers, including 7 Deputy Commissioners. According to the order Bhupinder Kumar (IAS), Mission Director, National Health

Mission, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla.

Anshul Garg (IAS), Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag. Choudhary Mohammad Yasin (IAS), Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, has been transferred and posted as Mission Director, National Health Mission, J&K.

Shrikant Balasaheb Suse (IAS), Additional Deputy Commissioner in the office of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Shopian.

Nazim Zai Khan (KAS), Deputy Commissioner Ramban, has been transferred and posted as Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir.

Dr. Ghulam Nabi Itoo (KAS), Commissioner, ● More On P6

Rajnath Hails Army's Role In Ladakh Standoff

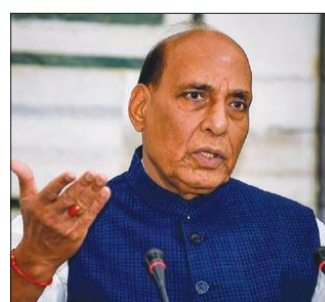
Press Trust Of India

LUCKNOW: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday said the Indian Army has boosted the morale of the country and also enabled the people to hold their heads high during the border standoff with China.

He said this while addressing a gathering here during the 'bhoomipujan' and foundation stone laying ceremony of the new Command Hospital.

"The charismatic (karishmaayi) performance by the Army during the India-China standoff has boosted the morale of the country and also enabled the citizens to hold their heads high," he said, drawing a thunderous applause from the crowd.

The military face-off had erupted on May 5 following



violent clashes between the Indian Army and the PLA in the Pangong lake area.

"The entire world is facing COVID-19, pandemic No one had thought that with the onset of the pandemic, celebrating festivals such as Holi, Eid and Diwali will be without much fanfare (dhoomdhaam). No one had imagined that trains will come to a halt, and schools ● More On P6

Proud Moment, Says Kin Of Kashmiri-Origin Woman Named In Biden Team

SRINAGAR: Kashmiri-origin Sameera Fazili's parents wanted her to be a physician, but she was not quite in agreement.

Fazili's plans fructified on Friday when the Biden-Harris Transition named her as the deputy director of the National Economic Council at the White House. The council coordinates the economic policy-making process and provides advice to the US president.

Fazili is the second Kashmiri-origin American appointed to a key position in the incoming Biden administration. Her appointment has sparked off jubiliations in her extended family in Srinagar.

"We are very proud. Everybody in Kashmir should be proud as it is a proud moment for the whole Kashmir,"



her uncle Rouf Fazili told PTI. "It is a great honour and respect for every one of us and a great occasion."

"She was not born here and her parents left the Valley in 1970-71, but she has a strong affinity with Kashmir," Rouf

Fazili said. "The last time she visited the valley was in 2007."

Rouf Fazili did not have the opportunity to speak to her niece as she was very busy with US President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration, which will take place on Wednesday.

"But, I spoke to the rest of the family and, obviously, they are very happy!" he added.

Another close family member said Sameera Fazili, whose father is a surgeon and the mother is a pathologist, was a bright child and brilliant in her studies.

"Her parents wanted her to be a physician, but she had other plans. Her inclination was towards public service," the relative said.

Sameera Fazili is a very active person who loves skiing, swimming, tennis and travelling, the relative said, adding that she was very fond of Kashmiri cuisine.

She is currently the economic agency lead on the Biden-Harris Transition and was earlier posted at the Federal Reserve Bank of ● More On P6

Walks in the park may help alleviate work-related stress, improve mental health

A new study has revealed that working people who regularly take walks in forests or greenspaces may have higher stress-coping abilities.

Work causes so much stress that it's become a global public health issue. Stress's impact on mental and physical health can also hurt productivity and result in economic loss.

In a study published in Public Health in Practice, researchers led by Professor Shinichiro Sasahara at the University of Tsukuba analysed workers' "sense of coherence" (SOC) scores, demographic attributes, and their forest/greenspace walking habits.

SOC comprises the triad of meaningfulness (finding a sense of meaning in life), comprehensibility (recognising and understanding stress), and manageability (feeling equipped to deal with stress). Studies have found factors such as higher education and being married can strengthen SOC, while smoking and not exercising can weaken it. People with strong SOC also have greater resilience to stress.

The study used survey data on more than 6,000 Japanese workers between 20 and 60 years old. It found stronger SOC among people who regularly took walks in forests or greenspaces.

"SOC indicates mental capacities for realising and dealing with



stress," Professor Sasahara says. "With workplace stress as a focal issue, there's a clear benefit in identifying everyday activities that raise SOC. It seems we may have found one."

People find comfort in nature, and in countries like Japan urban greenspaces are increasing in popularity where nature isn't readily accessible. This means

many workers in cities can easily take a walk among the trees.

The researchers divided the survey respondents into four groups based on their frequency of forest/greenspace walking. Then, they compared their walking activity against attributes such as age, income, and marital status, and with the respondents' SOC scores, which were grouped as

weak, middle, and strong.

Those with strong SOC showed a significant correlation with both forest and greenspace walking at least once a week. This key finding implies the greater benefits of urban greening—not just environmental, but also socio-economic.

"Our study suggests that taking a walk at least once a week in

a forest or green space can help people have stronger SOC," explains Professor Sasahara.

"Forest/greenspace walking is a simple activity that needs no special equipment or training. It could be a very good habit for improving mental health and managing stress."

Agencies

اہلیہ محمد الطاف حسین کا انتقال پر ملال

یہ خبر انتہائی دکھ اور افسوس کے ساتھ دی جاتی ہے کہ اہلیہ محمد الطاف حسین ساکنہ سولہ پانچین 16 جنوری 2021ء بروز ستینچوار کو اس جہاں فانی سے رحلت کر گئیں۔ اللہ تعالیٰ سے دعا ہے کہ مرحومہ کو جوار رحمت میں جگہ دے۔
 مرحومہ کی فاتحہ خوانی 19 جنوری 2021ء بروز منگلوار صبح 11.00 بجے ان کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع سولہ پانچین میں انجام دی جائیگی۔
 سوگواران
 محمد الطاف حسین (شوہر)
 محمد اقبال تھام (برادر)

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to change the name on electricity bill bearing Consumer ID No: 0213010002500 from Ghulam Qadir Yatoo TO Riyaz Ahmad Yatoo. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the PDD Office Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Riyaz Ahmad Yatoo
S/o Ghulam Qadir
R/o Nowpora Kalan Sopore

PUBLIC NOTICE

My cast has been wrongly written in school records as Baba While my correct cast is Peer which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office Eagle English Public School Bomi within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Arsalan Ashraf Peer
S/o Mohammad Ashraf Peer
R/o Aripora Bomi

J&K TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED TOURIST RECEPTION CENTRE SRINAGAR

For and on behalf of Managing Director, Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation Limited, e-Tenders are invited under Two Bid System i.e. Technical Bid and Financial Bid from Registered/ reputed companies/ firms/ individuals/ societies etc. for providing laundry services to city based JKTDC Hotels/Restaurants for a period of one year (extendable to further one year) on the terms and conditions mentioned in the tender document.

E-tender Notice No: JKTDC/GMO/2432-38

Dated 15.01.2021

Category of laundry	Earnest Money (EMD)	Cost of Tender documents	Class of Service provider	Tender inviting authority
1. Hotel laundry	Rs. 20,000/-	Rs. 1000/-	Registered/ reputed companies/ firms/ individuals/ societies etc.	General Manager (Operations) K
2. Restaurant laundry				
3. Staff uniform				
4. Guest laundry				

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

1	Date of issue of tender notice	15.01.2021	4.00 pm
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	16.01.2021	4.30 pm
3	Bid submission Start Date	18.01.2021	10.00 am
4	Bid submission End Date	15.02.2021	upto 4.00 pm
5	Deadlines for receiving the Hard Copy (Original DD & EMD) with all relevant documents (In case of untoward situation/Govt. holiday) the hard copies will be received in next working day	17.02.2021	upto 4.00 pm
6	Opening of Technical Bid /hard copies (In case of untoward situation/Govt. holiday) the technical bid will be opened in next working day	18.02.2021	1.00 pm

Sd/-
 General Manager (O)
 Kashmir

DIPK-11820/20

Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Sopore.

QUOTATION.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor UT of J&K, the Executive Engineer R&B Division hereby invites sealed quotation affixed with Re.2/- Revenue stamps from the approved dealers for the items mentioned below required for AEE's office Sopore/Rafiabad and establishment section The intending dealers are requested to attach a CDR of Rs 2000/- (Rupees Two thousand) only on any recognized Bank pledged to the official designation of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore with the quotation. The quotation should reach this office on or before and will be opened on 22-01-2021 the same date or some other date convenient to the Executive Engineer in presence of the dealers who may like to be present there. In case the last date of receipt of tenders happens to be holiday/Hatal/curfew the same shall be received on the next working day.

S.No	Particulars	Qty
1	Supply, installation testing and commissioning of 1600 VA power inverter of Exide/ Microteck/Luminous with 2 No 12 volts, 180 AH batteries of same make including PVC trolley for housing of batteries. (Make to be approved before installation) The job includes input and output leads of power inverter including supply and fixing of appropriate wiring, switch, LED etc complete job.	1 No.

Terms and conditions:-

- The opening authority reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation without assigning any reason thereof.
- The quotationers shall quote their rates clearly without any cuttings over writings or alternations.
- The rates quoted shall be inclusive all taxes, levies and loading unloading but excluding VAT (which shall be paid extra as applicable).
- The successful quotationer shall have to supply items within 02 days from the date of issuance of allotment/ supply order.
- In addition of above, the contract shall be governed by the by the terms and conditions as laid down in the PWD form 25 (Double).

No:- 12945-55
 Dated: 15-01-2021

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor,
 of J&K

Executive Engineer
 R&B Division Sopore.

DIPK-11782/20

J&K TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED TOURIST RECEPTION CENTRE SRINAGAR

For and on behalf of Managing Director, J&K Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. e-Tenders are invited under two bid system i.e. Technical bid and Financial bid for annual contract for providing of Transport facilities to JKTDC on contractual basis for year 2021-22 on the terms and conditions mentioned in the tender document.

E-Tender Notice No. JKTDC/GMO/2425-30

Dated 15/01/2021

S.No.	Group	Items of Supply	Amount of CDR	Cost of Tender Document	Tender Inviting authority
1.	"A"	Transport facilities to JKTDC	Rs.15000/-	Rs.1000/-	Gen. Manager (Operation)K JKTDC

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility, specification, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/download from the website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below.

1	Date of issue of tender notice	15.01.2021	3:00 pm
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	16.01.2021	2:00 pm
3	Bid submission Start Date	19.01.2021	10:00 am
4	Bid submission End Date	09.02.2021	upto 4:00pm
5	Deadlines for receiving the Hard Copy (Original DD & EMD) with all relevant documents (In case of untoward situation/Govt. holiday) the hard copies will be received in next working day	10.02.2021	upto 4:00 pm
6	Opening of Technical Bid /hard copies (In case of untoward situation/Govt. holiday) the technical bid will be opened in next working day	13.02.2021	11:00 am

General Manager (Ops)
 Kashmir

DIPK-NB-5128/20



Office Of The Block Medical Officer Khansahib

Tel No. 01951-277373, Email: bpmkhansahib@gmail.com Pin code: 191111.

Notice for Dasti Quotations

On Behalf of Lt. Governor Union Territory of J&K. Sealed Dasti Quotations affixed with revenue stamp of Rs. 10/= are invited from Authorized Contractors for the civil work at SDH hospital Khansahib. The details of the work are mentioned as below:

S. No	Name of Civil Work	Rate Excluding GST Per Sqft.
1.	P/F Aluminum Partitioning Work of General ward including Glass, doors complete Job	

The terms and conditions are as under:

- The interested parties can approach to the office of the undersigned and submit the detailed estimated cost of the civil work for the above-mentioned work within 5 days from the publication of this notice.
- The supplier must have the Authorized Contractor Registration Certificate and copy of GST Certificate to be submitted with the Quotations.
- The Rates are for SDH Khansahib Only. The installation of work shall be done by the Contractor/Supplier at free of cost at site.
- The Payment will be released only after the work is completed in full and verification/ installation and comprising to the entire satisfaction to this office.
- The Quotations should reach to the office of the U/sd/- within 5 (Five days) from the publication of Notice. No Quotations after that will be accepted.
- The Quotations will be opened next day or any other day convenient to the members of the in presence of the interested parties.
- The U/sd have right to reject the quotations quoted without given any reasons. Moreover, the quantity of required work may be increase or decrease depending upon the availability of funds.
- Gst Extra as applicable.

Block Medical Officer
 Khansahib

DIPK-11762/20

Massive Blaze Renders 6 Families In Fateh Kadal Homeless

Disabled Man's Wife Suffers Injury After She Jumps Through Window During Fire Incident

SRINAGAR: At least six families lost their shelter in a massive blaze at Namachibal area of Fateh Kadal Srinagar on Friday that turned two residential houses into ashes.

From clothes to essentials, these families have lost everything in the devastating blaze.

With the damage caused to two residential houses, at least six families were rendered homeless amid the bone-chilling cold. These families belong to the down-trodden section and lost their everything in the massive blaze.

The family heads identified as Muhammad Amin Dar, Hilal Ahmad Dar, Bashir Ahmad Dar, Late Muhammad Sultan Dar, Jalal-ud-din Dar and Rafiq Ahmad Trambo are labourers and have no other source of income.

One of the family head, Muhammad Amin Dar is physically challenged from last 25 years while his wife has suffered a major injury during the blaze last evening as she has jumped through the window. "She is currently admitted in Bone and Joint hospital in Srinagar where she is undergoing treatment," the family told KNO.

Muhammad Amin Dar, according to the family has also lost Rs 1.5



Picture Courtesy: Social Media

lakh cash, which he had got from his in-laws. "We have lost everything. We don't even have a place to live in this harsh winter," the affected families said.

Chairman of local Mohalla committee, Ghulam Mustafa Bisati appealed the government to compensate the affected families so that they can build their homes again—(KNO)

Advisor To Hear Grievances At Srinagar On Jan 18



SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Ahmad Khan, will convene a public hearing at Grievance Cell, Church Lane, Srinagar on January 18 (Monday) from 11:30 am onwards.

The public deputations and individuals, who want to bring their grievances and demands into the notice of Government, can meet the Advisor at the said venue.

It is further informed that the deputations, delegations, individuals or other people who want to meet the Advisor have to seek a prior appointment from his office on following phone numbers: 9419168268; 7006776586.

All such people who will be visiting the venue are requested to follow all health care guidelines and protocols and the deputations should not exceed more than three members in view of the corona pandemic.

Unidentified Body Recovered In Srinagar

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Police on Saturday recovered an unidentified non-Muslim male body, age about 50 years from Allochibagh Srinagar.

Police spokesman said that the body was later taken to hospital for autopsy and other medico legal formalities.

"Proceeding under section 174 CrPC has been initiated. After completion of all necessary legal formalities including Covid test & Post Mortem, the dead body has been kept in Mortuary at SMHS Srinagar," police said.

Anybody having any information regarding the identity of the body may kindly inform Police Station Shergharhi on 9596770525, 9596770861 or Police Control Room Kashmir on 112.

SKIMS Can Cure Any Disease: Dr Ahangar Says Intelligent Workforce Of India Developed Corona Vaccine In Less Than A Year

SRINAGAR: Director, Sheri Kashmir Institute Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura, Dr AG Ahangar on Saturday said the much awaited vaccine for Corona-Virus has been developed, less than a year after the outbreak of deadly pandemic.

Dr Ahangar said developing a vaccine for novel Corona-Virus was like a miracle to happen and that the collective efforts of the intelligent workforce of India finally succeeded to develop the same.

"It takes decades to develop a vaccine for viral pathology; in fact there is still no vaccine available for many viral diseases. But thanks god the intelli-



gent workforce of our country succeeded to develop a vaccine for Corona-Virus which was once like a miracle to happen," Director SKIMS said while ad-

ressing a press conference. Flanked by Mayor SMC Junaid Mattu, Dr Ahangar said the SKIMS has emerged as the only health care institution of Jammu and Kashmir which can cure any disease be it viral pathology or pandemic like COVID-19.

He said the Prime Minister launched a vaccination drive in India including Jammu and Kashmir and SKIMS was chosen as apex center for vaccination. Director SKIMS further said the health institution he heads through medication and use of disposables managed to contain the spread of novel disease to a huge extent.

He also asked his colleagues

at SKIMS which include doctors, paramedic, technical and housekeeping staff to volunteer them for vaccination so as to remove apprehensions that the vaccine has any side effect.

"I have always been on forefront to fight any problem, I never recoiled from taking risks be it open heart surgery or administrative hitches, I as head of the institution ever since the outbreak of this pandemic fought from the front," Director SKIMS said.

He added that "I again volunteer myself for first dose of vaccination so that my other colleagues, brothers and sisters get inspired"—(KNO)

Far Flung Villages To Be Equipped With Fire Extinguishers: Div Com



SRINAGAR: Webinar on Fire Safety Measures in Winter was jointly organised by National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM), Institution of Engineers (India) J&K State Centre, Srinagar in collaboration with J&K Fire and Emergency Services, SDRF, Divisional Administration Kashmir and State Emergency Operation Centre.

The webinar was inaugurated by Dr. B. Srinivas, Director General, Fire & Emergency Services and Commandant General CD, HG and SDRF. He appreciated the initiative taken to generate public awareness about fires in winters and urged for greater community involvement for ensuring fire safety and focus on fire prevention. He said that F&ES, Civil Defence, Home Guards and SDRF are doing exceptional work and implored people to join Civil Defence and learn fire-fighting and life-saving skills.

Speaking on the occasion Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Pandurang K Pole said that in Kashmir most of the houses in Kashmir are made up of wood which is vulnerable to fire. He said it's important to frame area specific solutions for all hazards including fire because accessibility is an issue.

He appreciated Fire & Emergency Services for doing an excellent work but suggested that in far-flung areas it become a challenge due to the difficult terrain and the localities become vulnerable to fire. He issued instructions to Director Rural Development Kashmir to procure 2 to 3 multipurpose Fire extinguishers, for all Panchayats of Kamah, Keran, Machil, Gurez and Tulail blocks and also around 700 far-flung villages in hilly areas which have limited road access in winters. These Fire Extinguishers shall be procured by the Rural Development Department and placed at the disposal of the respective Panchayats. Volunteers shall be identified in each Panchayat and they will be imparted fire-fighting training, so that it strengthens the Community level Disaster Management teams and encourages them to be part of the Disaster management set-up.

Div Com directed that fire extinguishers shall immediately be procured by the Heads of Department and installed in all Government offices. He directed that Ghats on River Jhelum shall be identified by Joint Director Fire Services, where facility shall be made available for drawing water by mobile pumps, in case of any fire incident in the locality. He appreciated the organisers for holding this most important webinar.

The panelists included RC Sharma, Former Director Delhi Fire Service, Ravi Kumar Panditta Commandant 7th Bn, NDRF from Bathinda Punjab, and Bashir Ahmed Shah, Jt. Dir F&ES Kashmir. The opening remarks were given by Dr. Amir Ali Khan, Faculty NIDM, who said that care should be taken of the lifeline infrastructure including hospitals, in view of the fire vulnerability.

Chairman IEL, Aamir Ali said that J&K is vulnerable to multiple disasters, but Fire is the most common disaster that we encounter in our daily lives particularly winter and unfortunately the basic cause of fire is usually human error, accident or negligence. He said that improper use of gas, charcoal or firewood Bukharies also results in fires, or even deaths due to asphyxia. He cautioned that kitchen fires are also very common, when food is kept unattended, while cooking and Electrical short circuits, due to overloading the power sockets, or using faulty electrical appliances, electrical room heaters, electric blankets are also very common in winters.

Aamir said that in Srinagar 200 volunteers have been trained in Fire-fighting and basic first aid, under the Centrally sponsored Aapda Mitra Scheme and over 10,000 community based volunteers have also been trained in 20 Districts, besides thousands of Volunteers from CD, NSS, NCC, Scouts/Guides. He said that Civil Defence, SDRF, NDRF, F&ES, Health Department and Red Cross regularly conduct short-term training on fire-fighting techniques and basic first-aid skills and if the general public, particularly youth get involved, it can to a great extent, ensure a safer environment.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir Office of the Transport Commissioner, J&K Jammu

Subject: Appointment of Sub Motor Vehicle Inspector under PM's Special Package.

- Ref No. i) TR/25Gen/2016-PF-IV DATED 11-01-2021
- Ref. No. ii) DMRR/MR/Sel/27/2020 Dated 19-06-2020
- Ref. No iii) SSB/Secy Sel/ 02 (m) 2020/ 1824-26 Dated 10-03-2020

Order No. 03 - TC Of 2021 Dated 15-01-2021

On the recommendations of Service Selection Board received through Administrative Department vide letter No.TR-25/Gen/2016-PF-V dated 11/01/2021, sanction is hereby accorded to the temporary appointment of below mentioned candidate as Sub Motor Vehicle Inspector (under Hon'ble Prime Ministers Special Package) for Kashmiri Migrants in Motor Vehicles Department:

(Divisional Cadre Kashmir).			
S.No	Name & Parentage	Residence	Category
01	Sh Sushant Koul S/o Ashok Kumar Koul	Dinanagar, Barnai, Jammu	OM

The appointee shall be allowed to join only on production of following certificates/documents in original:-

- I. Academic/Technical Qualification Certificates.
- II. Date of Birth Certificate.
- III. Health Certificate Issued by the Competent Authority.
- IV. Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) issued by the Competent Authority.
- V. No Objection Certificate from the District Industries Centre (DIC) & District Employment Exchange to the effect that no loan under the self-employment scheme has been taken by the appointee.
- VI. Reserved Category Certificate, if any.
- VII. Migration certificate of being a Kashmiri Migrant duly issued by Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner, (Migrant).

This order shall however, be subject to the following conditions:

1. The appointees shall be on probation for a period of two years in the first instance.
2. The appointee shall report in the office of Transport Commissioner, J&K Jammu within 21 days from the date of issuance of the order and his/her appointment shall deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio, without any further notice as per the instructions issued by General Administration Department vide Circular No. 08-JK (GAD) of 2019 dated 04.12.2019.
3. His/ Her joining shall become effective only after he/she executes an agreement in the "Form" prescribed under J&K, Kashmiri Migrants (Special Drives) Recruitment Rules 2009 issued under notification, SRO No. 412 of 2009 dated 30.12.2009.
4. The appointee shall also submit an affidavit duly attested by The First Class Judicial Magistrate in the shape of an affidavit to the effect:-
 - i. That in case if any adverse report his/her character and antecedents is received from Additional Director General of Police, (CID), J&K to whom a reference shall be made by the HoD, (Appointing Authority) the candidate shall have no right to claim his/her appointment and his/her appointment as such shall be deemed to have cancelled ab-initio,
 - ii. That in case, if on verification, any Certificate produced by the appointee viz Academic/Technical Certificate, Matriculation/Date of Birth Certificate, Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC), Reserved Category Certificate (if any) and Migration Certificate, are proved to be fake, forged or tampered, the appointment shall post-facto be cancelled ab-initio.
 - iii. The appointee shall have to work in respective District/Division of appointment in the Kashmir Valley and shall not be eligible for transfer outside the District/Division under any circumstances. In case, the appointee migrates from the Kashmir Valley at any time during his/her service tenure, for any reasons whatsoever, his/her appointment/service shall stand terminated without any notice if, by the action his/her migration, in terms of agreement executed by the each appointee under SRO-412.
5. The salary of the appointee shall not be drawn and disbursed to him/her unless the satisfactory reports in respect of (4) above are received in his/her favour.
6. The appointment of the above candidates shall be governed by the "New Pension Scheme" as per SRO 400 dated 24.12.2009.
7. The appointment of the above candidates is subject to the final outcome of the case(s), if any, pending before any Hon'ble Court.

Sd/-
(Pardeep Kumar) KAS,
Transport Commissioner
J&K, Jammu.
NO: TC/JK/Esstt/2020/ 1825-30
Dated: 15-11-2020
DIPK-11806/20

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
- PAMPORA: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 1980 - NASA launches Fltsatcom-3
- 1987 - US President Reagan signs secret order permitting covert sale of arms to Iran
- 1991 - Iraq fires 8 Scud missiles on Israel
- 1995 - 7.2 earthquake destroys Kobe, Japan and kills 5,372
- 1996 - The Czech Republic applies for membership of the European Union.
- 1996 - Iraq agrees to talks concerning a UN plan to allow for the Iraqi sale of \$1 billion of oil; proceeds from the sale would be used for humanitarian purposes



HIJRI
CALENDAR

03

JAMADI
-UL-SANI
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR
6: 08
ZUHR
12: 38
ASR
4: 08
MAGRIB
5: 50
ISHA
7: 14

From KO Archives

12 KILLED IN FIDAYEEN ATTACK ON SGR AIRPORT

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR - : In yet another attempt to storm the heavily guarded Srinagar airport, where extraordinary security arrangement had been put in place after the recent bid, Fidayeen forced their way beyond the outer gate to engage the security personnel in a fierce encounter near its main gate this afternoon. Twelve people, including four security personnel, six militants and two civilians, were killed in the broad day dare-devil assault.

According to reports, a 6-member Fidayeen squad donning police uniforms and travelling in a State Forest Corporation (SFC) Mahindra jeep, hijacked from Barthana, Qamarwari, forced their entry beyond the outer gate of the Srinagar airport a Humhama after lobbing grenades followed by heavy firing to reach the main gate at about 2.45 p.m. today.

Near the main gate, the Fidayeen split into three groups, two of them who dared the CRPF personnel were gunned down at the gate. Two others sneaked into the airport area after crossing the drop gate while two more took position in the nearby shopping complex.

In the ensuing shootout, in which both the sides used heavily sophisticated automatic weapons, three Central Re-served Police Force (CRPF) personnel and two civilians were killed. Lashker spokesman Abu Usama called media organisations here to claim responsibility for the attack. Six of our men led by Salahuddin broke the airport security cordon, he claimed. Other members of the Fidayeen squad were identified as Abu Hanzallah, Abu Usama, Abu- Khubaib, Abu Sayyaf and Abu Abduhau.

While four militants were killed on the spot after army and police reinforcements were called out, two others died in the nearby shopping complex in the exchange of fire. Reports -said the shopping complex was destroyed in heavy shelling which also resulted in the death of two holed up Fidayeen.

The two civilians killed in the shootout were identified as the manager of tile Barzalla branch of Ellaquai Dehati Bank, M A Muneer, and 16-year old Nasreen, a resident of Delhi. Muneer had gone to see off his nephew. The encounter ended at 5.10 p.m. During the operation, Humhama village and the adjoining areas were sealed off. Muneer, manager of Ellaquai Dehati Bank, received a full burst of gun-fire on his face, police said, adding both Muneer and Nasreen, whose body lay on the road for quite some time, were identified from their identity cards.

Of the 12 injured security personnel, including four CRPF women constables and local policemen, three succumbed to injuries in the hospital, an official spokesman said. The injured security personnel were airlifted to the base hospital at I3adamibagh. The injured women CRPF personnel were stated to be in critical condition at the hospital, he said.

The attack came despite a high alert sounded by the authorities at the airport on January 7 when CRPF personnel guarding the main entrance noticed a private vehicle with five militants in fake uniforms trying to storm the airport. On being noticed they fled.

Shortly after the incident, a Lashker spokesman claiming responsibility for the attack said the six militants were the same who were involved in January 7 attempt at the airport.

The injured have been shifted to the Air Force hospital where condition of four women CRPF personnel was reported to be serious. The militants made the attempt when two commercial flights, one each of Jet Airways and Indian Airlines were parked at the Airport. Their departure scheduled at 3: 15 pm and 3 pm respectively was delayed following the incident. Six assault rifles and a large quantity of ammunition and grenades were recovered from the deceased militants, the officials said.

The chief minister accompanied by director general of police A. K. Suri flew from Jammu to the site of the incident to take stock of the situation. Dr Farooq flew back later leaving behind the DGP.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 17 January, 2001)

Retired Doctors, More Syringes: Joe Biden's Plan To Get US Vaccinated

WILMINGTON: US President-elect Joe Biden on Friday said he would order increased production of syringes and other supplies to ramp up vaccinations against COVID-19 and improve upon the Trump administration rollout that he called a "dismal failure."

Under Biden's plan, federal disaster-relief workers would set up thousands of vaccination centers, where retired doctors would administer shots to teachers, grocery store workers, people over 65 years old and other groups who do not currently qualify.

The Democrat would invoke the Defense Production Act to increase production of equipment needed to distribute the vaccines, such as glass vials, needles and syringes, according to a document released by his transition team. He would also use the law to support vaccine refrigeration and storage.

Biden said his team has identified companies that are ready to be activated under the law, which enables the president to order businesses to produce items necessary for national defense. States that use their National Guard in the effort would be reimbursed by the federal government, the transition team said.

The coronavirus has killed more than 390,000 people in the United States, and a top Biden adviser said on Friday the death tally could reach 500,000 by February. Biden has promised to do better than President Donald Trump to curb the virus and get 100 million vaccine shots into the arms of Americans during his first 100 days in office.

"This is a time to set big goals and pursue them with courage and conviction because the health of the nation is literally at stake," said Biden, who takes office on Wednesday.

Speaking near his home in Wilmington, Delaware, Biden called for increasing vaccine distribution in lower-income neighborhoods not currently well served by hospitals and pharmacies. Biden also plans a marketing campaign to encourage those skeptical of the vaccine to get inoculated. His transition team said he will reorganize the vaccine distribution team currently called "Operation Warp Speed" and has asked former Food and Drug Administration chief David Kessler to work with manufacturers to boost vaccine availability.

Biden said his administration will release the vast majority of doses when they become available, rather than holding back a large portion to ensure that recipients can get a second dose, which had been the Trump administration's approach for much of the rollout. States will get regular updates to know how many doses are coming to ensure they can distribute them efficiently.

Norway Warns of Vaccination Risks For Sick Elderly Patients After 23 Die

NORWAY: Norway said Covid-19 vaccines may be too risky for the very old and terminally ill, the most cautious statement yet from a European health authority as countries assess the real-world side effects of the first shots to gain approval.

Norwegian officials said 23 people had died in the country a short time after receiving their first dose of the vaccine. Of those deaths, 13 have been autopsied, with the results suggesting that common side effects may have contributed to severe reactions in frail, elderly people, according to the Norwegian Medicines Agency.

"For those with the most severe frailty, even relatively mild vaccine side effects can have serious consequences," the Norwegian Institute of Public Health said. "For those who have a very short remaining life span anyway, the benefit of the vaccine may be marginal or irrelevant."

The recommendation does not mean younger, healthier people should avoid being vaccinated. But it's an early indication of what to watch as countries begin to issue safety monitoring reports on the vaccines. Emer Cooke, the new head of the European Medicines Agency, has said tracking the safety of Covid vaccines, especially those relying on novel technologies such as messenger RNA, would be one of the biggest challenges once shots are rolled out widely.

Pfizer and BioNTech are working with the Norwegian regulator to investigate the deaths in Norway, Pfizer said in an e-mailed statement. The agency found that "the number of incidents so far is not alarming, and in line with expectations," Pfizer said.

Allergic reactions have been uncommon so far. In the U.S., authorities reported 21 cases of severe allergic reactions from Dec. 14-23 after administration of about 1.9 million initial doses of the vaccine developed by Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE. That's an incidence of 11.1 cases per million doses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Though both Covid-19 vaccines approved so far in Europe were tested in tens of thousands of people -- including volunteers in their late 80s and 90s -- the average trial participant was in his or her early 50s. The first people to be immunized in many places have been older than that as countries rush to inoculate nursing-home residents at high risk from the virus.



WHO had said it wanted vaccination under way in every country within the next 100 days.

WHO Stops Short Of Advising Proof Of COVID-19 Shots For Travel

GENEVA: The World Health Organization on Friday refrained from advising proof of COVID-19 vaccination or immunity as a condition for international travel, citing "critical unknowns" regarding their efficacy in reducing transmission and limited availability.

The WHO's Emergency Committee, composed of 19 independent experts, held its sixth meeting in a year as the global death count from the pandemic reached two million among more than 90 million cases.

The experts issued a series of recommendations, which WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus accepted and sent to the U.N. agency's 194 member states, a statement said.

"At the present time, do not introduce requirements of proof of vaccination or immunity for international travel as a condition of entry as there are still critical unknowns regarding the efficacy of vaccination in reducing transmission and limited availability of

vaccines," the WHO panel said.

"Proof of vaccination should not exempt international travellers from complying with other travel risk reduction measures."

Didier Houssin, panel chairman, said that there was currently a "great disparity" among countries about testing, quarantines and travel bans, leading to the world being "a little bit paralysed, a little bit confused".

Its advice to WHO was to "take a strong lead in order to produce clear guidance and scientifically based guidance about how best to facilitate and permit the circulation of people in a safe manner by air, by sea", he told a news conference.

Mike Ryan, WHO's top emergency expert, said: "What the committee is saying is 'at this present time', scientific evidence is not complete, there isn't enough vaccine and therefore we shouldn't do that now and create an unnecessary restriction to travel.

"So we are trying to protect the travel

space and ensure economies are not entirely isolated," he added.

Britain is tightening border controls from Monday to block new variants of COVID-19, suspending all "travel corridor" arrangements that had meant arrivals from some countries did not require quarantine.

The WHO panel urged countries to monitor virus variants such as those identified by Britain and South Africa to assess the effects on the efficacy of vaccines, drugs and diagnostic tests.

It called for promoting technology transfer to low- and middle-income countries with the potential capacity to accelerate global production of COVID-19 vaccines, severe disease and asymptomatic infection" as well as the duration of immunity following infection or vaccination, and protection after a single dose, the panel said.

Probe On For Covid Origin, WHO Says "We May Never Find Patient Zero"

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND: The World Health Organization's emergency committee called Friday for globally-ramped up coronavirus sequencing studies in order to combat troubling new variants stalking the globe.

The meeting was dragged forward by two weeks for urgent talks on the emerging, seemingly more contagious strains of the virus, as the death count from the Covid-19 pandemic topped two million, according to an AFP count.

The emergency committee came out against countries requiring proof of vaccination from incoming international travellers.

However, it said it was time to overhaul recommendations on travel guidance given what was now known about the virus.

The WHO said it wanted Covid-19 vaccination under way in every country within the next 100 days, amid concerns that rich nations are hogging the first batches coming off the production lines.

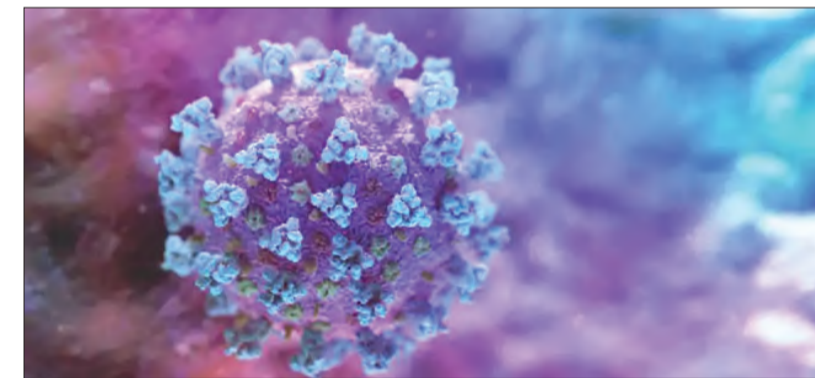
And while it sounded the alarm on a new virus variant circulating in Brazil, the WHO warned that the current infection spikes in some countries could be blamed on lapses in behaviour rather than simply the new mutations.

Variants and vigilance

The recently-discovered variants can only be identified by sequencing their genetic code -- an analysis that is not possible everywhere.

"On variants, (the committee) called for a global expansion of genomic sequencing and sharing of data, along with greater scientific collaboration to address critical unknowns," the WHO said in a statement after the virtual meeting.

The committee also called on the WHO to come up with a standardised system for



naming new variants to keep them geographically and politically neutral, in a bid to avoid stigmatisation.

In its epidemiological bulletin earlier this week, the WHO said the coronavirus mutation first found in Britain had spread to 50 territories, while a similar South African-identified strain has now been found in 20.

A third mutation originating in the Brazilian Amazon, is currently being analysed and could impact the immune response, according to the WHO.

The situation in northern Brazil's Amazonas state, and particularly its capital Manaus, has deteriorated significantly, with hospitals pushed to the limit said WHO emergency director Michael Ryan.

"If this continues, we are going to see a wave that is greater than what was a catastrophic wave in April and May in Amazonas," he told a press conference in Geneva.

But Ryan stressed it was "too easy to just lay the blame on the variant" -- saying people and authorities need to accept their share of responsibility for their actions which were driving up transmission.

Maria Van Kerkhove, the WHO's Covid-19 technical lead, added: "This virus

is dangerous on its own -- variant or not."

"Defining moment"

On travel, the emergency committee recommended that countries do not require proof of vaccination from incoming travellers, given that the impact of vaccines on reducing transmission is not yet known and the availability of vaccines remains limited.

Committee chairman Didier Houssin said that given the disparity of countries' approaches to visas, quarantine and travel bans, it is "really time" for the WHO to reassess what guidance could be provided on international air, land and sea travel.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the world was at a "defining moment in the pandemic", as he called for vaccines to be distributed equitably across the globe.

Some 46 countries have started their vaccination campaigns, of which 38 are high-income nations.

"I want to see vaccination under way in every country in the next 100 days so that health workers and those at high risk are protected first," Tedros said. The first cluster of Covid-19 cases was discovered in December 2019 in Wuhan in China.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard tests long-range missiles, drones



TEHRAN, IRAN – The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) tested long-range missiles and drones against land and sea targets in Iran's fourth large-scale military show of force in two weeks amid tensions with the United States.

The IRGC on Saturday fired long-range ballistic missiles that travelled 1,800km (1,118 miles) and struck artificial targets in the northern part of the Indian Ocean. "Choosing a plethora of long-range missiles to hit sea targets shows that if the enemies of the Islamic republic harbour any ill will toward our national interests, maritime trade routes or our land, they will be targeted and destroyed by missiles," said Mohammad Bagheri, chief of staff of the armed forces.

"We have no intention for any aggression, but we announce with this drill that any aggressors to our country will be attacked with full force and in the shortest time."

IRGC commander-in-chief Hossein Salami said on Saturday one of the elite military organisation's goals is to be able to target "enemy war vessels" including aircraft carriers. On Friday, the IRGC fired dozens of "next-generation" missiles from an undisclosed location in desert areas in central Iran that were shown in videos aired by state broadcasting to hit their land targets.

"This is the roaring sound of a large number of IRGC ballistic missiles, which have this time been equipped with detachable warheads and can be guided outside the Earth's atmosphere," a state broadcast reporter said as a barrage of missiles was launched behind him.

Shortly after, the IRGC also tested loitering munitions, or "suicide drones", that were shown to hit a variety of land targets.

Tensions with the US

The fourth show of Iranian military force in the new year, the IRGC drill comes after two months of renewed tensions with the outgoing US President Donald Trump administration around the January 3 anniversary of the assassination of Iran's top general by the United States.

Qassem Soleimani, who led the foreign operations arm of the IRGC, was killed in a Trump-ordered drone strike in Baghdad last year. In the past two months, the US has flown nuclear-capable strategic bombers over the Middle East and has stationed an aircraft carrier in the region to "deter" a potential Iranian response.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, on the other hand, has accused the US of trying to "fabricate pretext for war".

The Trump administration has only intensified its "maximum pressure" campaign, which started after unilaterally abandoning Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers in 2018, before president-elect Joe Biden enters the White House on January 20. The US Treasury on Friday announced new sanctions targeting Iran's shipping, aerospace and aviation industries.

On Thursday, on the second day of a maritime drill by Iran's army, personnel spotted – and captured on camera – a foreign submarine that quickly left the scene after receiving warnings. The submarine appeared to be American.

As part of the drill, the army induced Iran's largest military vessel into its fleet, fired torpedoes from locally made submarines, and conducted special forces operations.

On January 8, the IRGC unveiled a huge underground missile base along the Gulf coast that it said was one of "many" such bases.

Days earlier, Iran's army held its first-ever drill for locally made drones in the northern province of Semnan, which included aerial targeting and destruction of objectives using air-to-air missiles, hitting land targets, and employing suicide drones.

"Not looking to commit a crime"

Iran's state broadcaster aired footage of missiles being fired at two US bases in Iraq last year in response to Soleimani's assassination on Friday night for the first time.

In the footage, Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the head of the IRGC's aerospace division, is shown in an operation room where he issues the order to fire the missiles that inflicted damage on the US bases, but no fatalities.

"We're firing the missiles one by one so the people can get away. We're not looking to commit a crime," he said, calling Trump a "criminal".

A recent interview with Hajizadeh was also aired, in which he said 13 missiles were fired at the bases and the US was on high alert but did not know where Iran would strike.

He also said then-Iraqi prime minister Adel Abdul Mahdi was informed "out of respect" that US targets would be hit by Iranian missiles – without knowing the location – only half an hour before the strike.

Hajizadeh claimed that Iranian missiles killed an unknown number of US troops, saying the Americans "themselves brought the dead out from under the rubble, but first dismissed the Iraqis from the location".

China Honours "Bat Woman" As WHO Team Arrives To Probe Covid Origins

Beijing/Wuhan: China has honoured a virologist of a controversial Wuhan-based bio-lab, which was at the centre of COVID-19 storm, as a WHO team arrived at the Chinese city to probe the origins of the coronavirus.

Shi Zhengli from the Wuhan Institute of Virology who has earned the moniker of "Bat Woman" for her passionate research into bats and viruses was honoured as an "advanced worker of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS)", the state-run Global Times reported, citing a WIV announcement on Friday.

Outgoing US President Donald Trump has alleged that the novel coronavirus emanated from WIV before it spread across the world and claimed millions of lives and shattered global economies.

Ever since the virus outbreak came

to light in Wuhan in December last, speculation has been rife on whether the viral strain originated from China's premier virology institute or from its nearby Huanan Seafood Market.

Shi was honoured along with 20 advanced workers during the CAS 2021 annual work conference held in Beijing, said Liu Lijun, director of the National Commendation and Rewarding Office of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security.

She was praised as adhering to the scientific values of innovation, serving the country and benefiting people, and fought hard and never flinched in the face of difficulties and challenges, the report said.

Shi came under the spotlight of local and global media after Trump's allegation. Trump had asked China

to permit the US to conduct a probe, which Beijing ignored.

Curiously, after her name appeared in the local and foreign media early last year, Shi conspicuously disappeared for months amid rumours that she had defected to a western country.

But she suddenly resurfaced in official Chinese media and denied reports of her defection to the West and questioned Trump's allegation that the virus emerged from WIV.

"Trump's claim jeopardises and affects our academic work and personal lives. He owes us an apology," she was quoted by official media.

Significantly, Shi's "honour" by CAS coincides with the arrival of the 13-member World Health Organisation (WHO) team to Wuhan on Thursday to probe the origins of COVID-19.

Tokyo Man Rents Himself Out 'To Do Nothing'

CHANDIGARH: Shoji Morimoto has an unusual career: he makes money out of doing nothing.

For 10,000 yen--plus expenses for travels and means--Morimoto, now 37, can be hired to do exactly that--nothing. An article in The Independent says for that money, he won't do anything except "eat, drink, and give a simple response".

According to The Independent, Morimoto first offered his rather unusual services in 2018, when he quit a job in publishing to post a tweet that read: "I offer myself for rent, as a person who does nothing. Is it difficult for you to enter a shop on your own? Are you missing a player on your team? Do you need someone to keep a place for you? I can't do anything except easy things".

His bio on Twitter reads: "I will lend you a person (me) who does

nothing. We are always accepting. You will only get 10,000 yen, transportation expenses from Kokubunji station, and other expenses such as food and drink (if any). Please use DM for requests and inquiries. I can't do anything other than eating and drinking and giving easy responses".

He has since seen an enormous following online. When he first put up the offer he did it for free, The Independent says. However, his services saw a surprising number of responses, prompting him to charge a fee to reduce the number of requests he gets for his rather unusual offer. The Independent says he sees 3 or 4 clients a day, and since 2018, seen 3,000 people.

The Independent quotes him as saying that people rent him for various reasons, but mostly out of loneliness--they simply want

someone who's willing to listen.

From having lunch to posing for photos on Instagram, and even to accompany them to file for divorce, he's since been hired for a variety of reasons. The most unusual among them was a man who once hired him to describe a murder he had committed. Another person paid to take him to revisit the spot where he had tried to kill himself.

Morimoto, who holds a post-graduate degree in physics from Osaka University, told The Manichi newspaper: "I'm not a friend or an acquaintance. I'm free of the annoying things that go with relationships but I can ease people's feelings of loneliness".

Since 2018, Morimoto has published books, inspired a television drama, and gained 2,70,000 Twitter followers, the Independent says.

Most Organisations Lifted Freeze On Hiring: Naukri.com



Agencies

NEW DELHI: Hiring is set to bounce back as most organisations have lifted the freeze in hiring, according to a Naukri.com survey released on Thursday.

The survey revealed that only 11 per cent recruiters said that hiring is on hold in their respective organisations, while half of them had confirmed the same in the first wave of the survey (done in April, 2020).

Furthermore, 35 per cent of recruiters agreed that hiring is happening as usual against 13 per cent who confirmed so in the first wave of the survey.

On asked when they anticipate hiring to go back to pre-Covid levels in the second wave of the survey, 21 per cent recruiters said it will resume in 3 months, 26 per cent predicted 3-6 months, and 34 per cent said it would take their organisations 6 months to 1 year to start hiring like in preCovid days.

The survey also revealed that in the first wave of the survey, 44

per cent of recruiters had confirmed deferred joining. However in the second phase, that has declined to only 12 per cent.

While 32 per cent recruiters confirmed that increments have already been rolled out in the second wave of the survey, another 34 per cent will be extending salary hikes in the coming months. A total of 38 per cent recruiters have opted to offer increments in the range of 5 per cent to 10 per cent, whereas one-fifth have voted for the 15 per cent to 20 per cent increment bracket.

The survey was rolled-out to 1,300 recruiters. The first wave of the recruiters' survey was done in April 2020 and the second wave was conducted in October 2020.

Interestingly, as per a recent Naukri.com survey done with over 4,000 job seekers, majority of them (59 per cent) preferred a hybrid model of working. A significant 76 per cent of employees confirmed that work from home was equally or more productive than office.

Power Project Lays Defunct In Ganderbal For 1 Year



GANDERBAL: The 15 MW Ganderbal Power House, built in 1955, has been out of order for the past one year.

The water canal for the Ganderbal project cracked in December last year leading to its closure. The power department says that even if the water canal is repaired, only 4 MW of electricity can be generated.

The Ganderbal power project was dedicated to the people in 1961. At that time, Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad was the Prime Minister of the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Another small canal was also constructed on this canal, on which Ringle Water Treatment Plant was constructed, which had already been reduced from 15 MW to 9 MW, further reduced to 2.5 MW.

The repair work of the water canal near Malshahi Bagh was given to the Irrigation and Flood Control Department but

no work was done by the concerned department even after a year.

The phase has been partially repaired, which has partially restored the Ringle Water Supply Plant. The Ringle Water Plant supplies water to 80% of the population in the city of Srinagar. After that, the department repaired the machinery to restore it and also tried to generate electricity but due to cracks in the canal, the power house became inoperable again.

A senior officer attached to the power generation wing "We can still make 4 MW of power available to the people from this project but for that its canal needs to be repaired," he said.

It is pertinent to mention that Ganderbal Power House is the second oldest power generation project in the valley. Earlier, Mahura Power House was built, which was technically a complete masterpiece.(CNS)

Sopore Police Busts Fake Lashkar Module

Imam Among Others Arrested, Stamp And Posters Recovered

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Saturday claimed to have busted a fake Lashkar e Taiba module in the Warpora Sopore area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Police in a statement said that "Sopore Police received a complaint from one person (name withheld) stating therein that he has received a letter on the letterpad of Lashkar-e-Taiba wherein he has been directed to pay an amount of Rs 50 thousand for banned outfit, as the organisation is in dire need of funds for carrying out various activities of organisation. Upon receipt of the complaint, FIR No.11/2021 U/S 13 ULPA 452, 393, 120-B, 511 IPC was registered at Police Station Sopore and investigation was taken up."

They said "During the course of investigation which involved utilization of human resources and technical means to trace the culprits, it came to fore that three persons identified as Ishaq Ahmad Reshi son of Ali Mohd Reshi (Maruti Ecco driver by profession), Mumtaz Ahmad War son of Mohd maqbool War (Imam by profession) and Ab Qayoom Ganie son of Mohd Sultan Ganie (Mason by profession), all residents of Warpora Sopore, mastered a plan to collect money



from the complainant.

The statement further said "Sopore police arrested the accused and upon interrogation they revealed how they were blackmailing the innocent general public and prominent businessmen of the area. Accused confessed that they used to identify the target first and then subsequently devise a plan to blackmail and loot the money by sending a letter on the letter pad of Lashkar-e-Taiba through kids, a letter-pad and one stamp has been recovered from their possessions, there area of operation was not

confined to Warpora only but they have extorted money from main Town Sopore," police have claimed in its statement

"As of now police have identified 8 persons who have been looted by them and some posters demanding money have been recovered from them".

Meanwhile, investigation of the case is on and some more arrests are expected. Sopore police also requests the general public to come forward and report any such sort of crime to police immediately so that innocent public can be saved from them, the statement added.

Police Arrests 5 Youth For Pasting Militant Posters

SRINAGAR: Police here in Kashmir Valley have arrested five persons for pasting threatening posters on walls and poles to intimidate people.

While divulging information about it, a police official said that a couple of days back, some threatening posters of the militant outfit were found pasted in Seer and Batagund villages of South Kashmir's Tral area.

Police immediately took cognizance of these intimidating posters and set investigation into motion after registering a formal case under relevant sections of Unlawful Activities at Police Station Tral, that falls in Southern Pulwama district.

"During the course of investigation, the Investigating Team raided multiple locations and rounded up several suspects. During the questioning of these suspects and collection of other evidence 5 militant associates were found to be involved in the act and accordingly they were arrested."

The official identified the arrested persons as Jehangir Ahmad Parry, Aijaz Ahmad Parry, Towseef Ahmad Lone, Sabzar Ahmad Bhat and Qa-

isar Ahmad Dar, all residents of Gulshanpora hamlet of Tral town.

"One Laptop and a printer used for the preparation and printing of these threatening posters have been seized as well and further investigation is in progress," the police official said.

Police with the assistance of the Army have arrested dozens of persons for their alleged involvement in militancy related cases. Most of these arrested youth have been accused of providing logistic support to the active militants in Kashmir.

Div Com Calls For Time Bound Issuance Of NOCs To Private Schools

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Pandurang K Pole today chaired a meeting with representatives of Private Schools of Kashmir.

The meeting, among others was attended by Director School Education Kashmir, Director Social Welfare, CE R&B, CE PHE, Deputy Labour Commissioner Kashmir, Joint Secretary JK BOSE, SSP Traffic Rural, representative of private schools and other concerned.

During the meeting, the representative raised various issues m being faced by them while getting NOCs from different departments.

The issues raised included ex-

ension in period of recognition/affiliation, abolishing of political non involvement certificate, end of commercial certificate, time bound NOCs, permanent registration of schools, implementation of March session, enhancement in the minimum school fee, onetime financial assistance, reduction in winter vacations, waving off of electricity and water charges, benefits of social welfare schemes to students and other issues.

Calling for issuance of certificate in time bound manner, the Div Com said that all their genuine issues shall be taken for due consideration as per new norms.

He directed concerned to disperse off all the pending applications on priority and make the process as hassle-free for smooth functioning of these schools.

The Div Com instructed concerned to do away with the unnecessary NOCs including transport certificates for those schools, which do not use such facilities.

He also stressed on abolishing political non involvement certificate and instead ask for no criminal antecedent certificate.

He said that there will be no compromise on children safety and instructed concerned to ensure all safety gadgets including fire safety equipment are installed in all school buildings.

Indigo To Launch Flight Services Between Delhi, Leh On Feb 22



NEW DELHI: IndiGo will launch flight services between Delhi and Leh on February 22, the private carrier announced on Saturday.

Leh will be the 63rd domestic destination for IndiGo. The bookings for the daily Delhi-Leh flights have already begun, the airline said in a press release.

"Leh, the capital of Ladakh, is known for its magnificent landscapes, crystal clear skies,

adventure activities, Buddhist monasteries and festivals. The destination attracts tourists from April to September," it noted.

Chief strategy and revenue officer of the airline Sanjay Kumar said, "We are working towards enhancing regional connectivity, which will not only increase access but also promote domestic trade and tourism in the country." PTI

Advisor Baseer Khan Attends Grand Plenary Of Startup India International Summit

SRINAGAR: Prime Minister, Narendra Modi today addressed the concluding session of the "Prarambh: Startup India International Summit" and Advisor to Lieutenant Governor Baseer Ahmad Khan attended the Summit through virtual mode on behalf of the Jammu and Kashmir Government.

The two-day summit that began in New Delhi on January 15 was inaugurated by Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food and Public Distribution, Piyush Goyal.

The Summit was organized by the Department for Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

The objective of the summit is to set up an ecosystem to boost entrepreneurship and innovation, enabling global linkages and partnerships, celebrating the progress made and define the way forward to strengthen the startup ecosystem.

On the sidelines of the event, before the start of Summit, Advisor Baseer Khan expressed his satisfaction over the way Industries and Commerce department is carrying out activities in line with the facilities being provided to startups in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Advisor noted that the Summit will provide a platform to the startups and young minds from around the world to come together and collaborate to work collectively with new ideas, innovation and invention.

The Advisor expressed satisfaction over the role being played by the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir in strengthening the startup ecosystem.

The journey of startups in Jammu and Kashmir and the achievements that come through promoting entrepreneurship in educational institutions through the industrial and academic collaboration to promote entrepreneurship is made smooth with the efforts of the department of industries and EDI.

The Advisor said that the youth of Jammu and Kashmir

have a penchant for innovation and this Startup opportunity will led to outstanding results.

The Advisor gave a brief about the Start-up Policy of Jammu and Kashmir that envisions the creation of 500 new Start-ups in next 10 years, besides establishing Incubators, fabrication and innovation labs and creation of two Start-up Hubs in Kashmir and Jammu.

He said that for an enabling ecosystem to be created, awareness, outreach and scouting of Start-ups has been done, besides a Portal www.startupjk.com has been made live for registrations of Start-ups. Till date, 129 registrations have been received on the Portal for recognition as Start-ups. Among the received application forms, 63 Start-ups have been recognized.

To sensitize people about the Start-up policy and scout potential innovative Start-ups, the Advisor said that a comprehensive outreach program of conducting boot camps across all the districts of the UT has already been completed.

Under Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog has sanctioned an Incubation Centre in favour of JKEDI. He further added that for Nurturing Start-ups and Capacity building of Mentors, two Pre-incubation Orientation Programmes have already been conducted both in Kashmir and Jammu.

The Advisor also said that UT of Jammu and Kashmir is working towards collaborating with National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) for patenting and Commercialization of Innovative technologies.

While taking the on-spot review of the working of JKEDI, the Advisor appreciated the role of JKEDI in facilitating the establishment of 14000 enterprises by the Institute. He also stressed that more and more Start-ups should be provided incubation facilities within the Institute.

Director JKEDI expressed his gratitude to Advisor for visiting the campus and apprised him about the working of the Institute.

NEWS MAKERS

DC Anantnag Visits Stranded Truckers On Highway



ANANTNAG: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, K.K.Sidha who is also the Chairman, District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) today visited National Highway Mir Bazar Anantnag to address the problems being faced by the stranded Truck Drivers.

The DC on the occasion distributed 3000 ration kits among stranded truck drivers at different locations including Mir Bazar, Vessu, Qazigund, Lower munda and Zig.

Moreover, on directions of the DC, makeshift/temporary toilets

along with adequate water facilities have been put in place by RDD for the stranded drivers.

It is important to mention that this is second visit of the DC to the National Highway this week for on spot redressal of the issues and problems being faced by the stranded drivers.

The drivers hailed the efforts of District Administration for ameliorating their problems in this hour of crisis.

The DC during the visit was accompanied by President, MC Anantnag, SDM Bijbehara, AD Food and revenue officers.

CE, KPDC Visits Kulgam, Takes Stock Of Power Scenario

KULGAM: The Chief Engineer (CE), (Distributions) KPDC, Aijaz Ahmad today visited district Kulgam to take stock of the power scenario in the district.

On the occasion, the CE inspected the divisional work shop at Kulgam where he enquired about outage and progress recorded in repairs of transformers. It was informed that after 3rd January 73 transformers got damaged and 57 stands repaired.

Later, he visited Sub division D.H.Pora and took stock of power scenario there.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Showkat Aijaz Bhat along with Chief Engineer Aijaz Ahmad chaired a meeting of officers here at Mini-Secretariat to review the power scenario in the district.

During the meeting a detailed discussion was held to augment the power scenario of the district. It was also informed that



all receiving stations are functioning normally.

The Chief Engineer on the occasion appealed people to make judicious use of electricity as the system is facing excessive overloading.

The meeting was attended by SE, KPDC South Circle, Ex-Engineer KPDC Kulgam, Ex-Engineer Sub Transmission and all territorial AEEs of electric division Kulgam.

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS (BOPEE)

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Subject: Extension of last date of admission of BDS Course for the academic session-2020-21-reg

Reference: DE-22(16)-(Act & Regulations)2020/5399 dated 11-01-2021.

Notice No. 008—BOPEE of 2021
Dated: 15-01-2021.

The Dental Council of India with the approval of Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India vide letter No. DE-22(16)-(Act & Regulations)-2020/5399 esl dated 11.01.2021, has extended the last date of admissions in BDS Course from 15.01.2021 to 30.01.2021 for the academic year-2020-21. Now, in continuation to ro Notification No.006-BOPEE of 2021 dated 11.01.2021, it is notified for information of all ro the concerned that the last date for completion of admission to BDS course-2020 is rd hereby extended upto 30th of Jan.2021 (4.00 PM). The Heads of Dental Colleges are advised L.) to furnish the shortfall, if any, to the Board on 30.01.2021 (5.00 PM) positively. E&OE

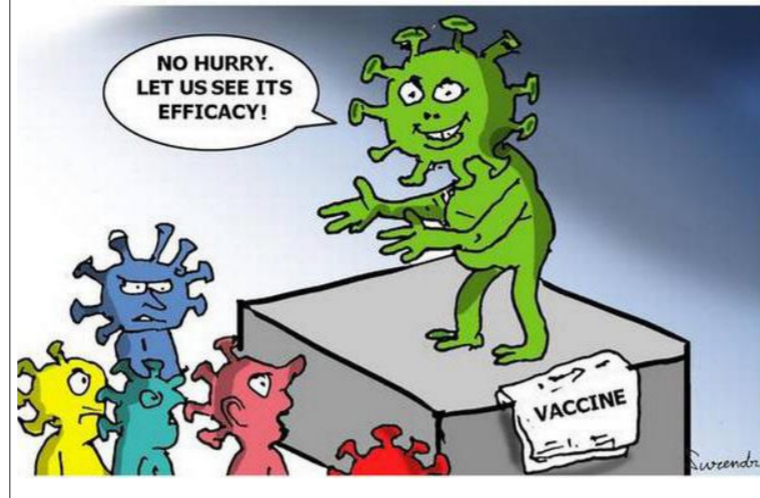
(Dr. Sunil Gupta)
Controller of Examinations
J&K BOPEE

No: BOPEE/Exam-31/2020 Dated:15-01-2021.
DIPK-NB-5142/20

KASHMIR
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NO HOLDS BARRED



Creating the impression that Israel is helping the Palestinians in good faith to tackle the virus while keeping them under occupation, was a remarkable achievement of the Israeli propaganda machine. But this is not surprising considering that Israel had hid the violence of its regime with such illusions for decades.

Qatar-Saudi Accord

ASAD MIRZA

With Saudi Arabia and Qatar signing a friendly bond that ended the three-year long economic blockade, which Riyadh had imposed on its tiny Gulf neighbour, regional observers see it as a springboard for achieving a greater regional partnership in which other regional players could be brought in to stabilise the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the two most influential members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), severed ties with Qatar in mid-2017, alleging that Doha supported terrorism, maintained ties with Iran, permitted Turkey to establish a military base on its soil, supported the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) movement in Egypt and more.

However, the latest development may augur well for the regional and pan-Arab relationships.

Turkey's relationship with the Arab world

Turkey's relationship with Arab states and in particular with Saudi Arabia has always remained thorny and knotty, with both sides trying to outdo each other and don the mantle of leading the Islamic world. Nevertheless, Turkey was one of the first countries to welcome the reconciliation between Qatar and Saudi Arabia on 4 January. The Turkish foreign ministry, in a written statement welcomed the reopening of land, air and sea borders between the two countries, expressing hopes of a comprehensive and lasting solution and that the GCC would lift all other sanctions against the Qatari people as soon as possible.

Turkey conveyed a more important message in the last sentence: "Being a strategic partner of the GCC and attaching great importance to the security and stability of the Gulf region, Turkey will continue to support all efforts in this direction."

The special relationship between Turkey and Qatar and the former's troubled relationship with the UAE and Saudi Arabia may change the dynamics for Turkey. Turkish observers believe that the resolution of the problems between Qatar and the GCC



will have a positive effect on Turkey's dialogue with the UAE and Saudi Arabia. However, Turkey may adopt a different approach dealing with the two.

Ties between Turkey and Saudi Arabia nosedived after the brutal slaying of Saudi dissident journalist Jamal Kashoggi at the hands of a Saudi death squad in Riyadh's Consulate to Istanbul in 2018.

However, in recent months, both sides have warmed-up to each other. President Recep Tayyip Erdo an spoke on the phone with King Salman on the occasion of the G20 Summit, last November, while the two countries' foreign ministers held in-person meetings on the side-lines of international summits.

On the other hand, Turkish-UAE relations are more complicated, and even Turks are flummoxed by this hostile attitude. As such it seems that the Turkish and UAE relations might not be resolved in the immediate future. At a press conference last week, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu

In short, this new development in the Gulf could also have a positive impact on Turkey's ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as the wider GCC members, depending on mutual willingness

described the UAE's stance toward Turkey as "unfriendly" and he said he did not know why the country was pursuing such an anti-Turkey policy.

The ties between the two countries nosedived after the coup d'état in Egypt that practically killed the Arab Spring. Abu Dhabi accuses Ankara of supporting the MB although Turkey says it does not differentiate between

MB-led governments and others. This spat has had repercussions on Turkish relations with other countries in the region too, from Syria to Libya and from Yemen to Sudan and Somalia.

Libyan conflict

The Qatar-Saudi spat also casted its shadow on several regional and international issues, including the conflict in Libya. Libya continues to be one of the top conflict zones of the region. In the conflict, Saudi Arabia has chosen to side with warlord Khalifa Haftar, whereas Qatar supports Haftar's rival, the UN-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) in Tripoli, and this had caused friction between the two Arab nations.

Ankara-based political analyst Dr Ali Bakeer, appearing on TRT World, cautioned that one should avoid drawing any hasty conclusions on the future of the Libyan conflict in light of Qatar-Saudi rapprochement. As per him, neither country is a main player

in the Libyan conflict.

Commenting on the regional repercussions of the accord, Dr Bakeer further opined that better Saudi-Qatari relations would mean a better Saudi-Turkish relations. These three countries have the potential to tilt the regional balance towards them and if they are able to bring in Egypt too, this can help in minimising other regional inter-conflicts

Dr Guma Al Gamaty, a Libyan academic and politician who heads the Taghyeer Political Party in Libya, opined on TRT World that in light of the rapprochement, he expects "less antagonism" from the GCC towards the internationally recognised GNA in Libya. According to Gamaty, Saudi and its GCC allies had grown wary of the GNA because it believed Qatar was backing it along with Turkey.

As the UAE has been accused of playing a divisive role in the Libyan peace process, Gamaty said the Doha-Riyadh reconciliation has a potential to turn Abu Dhabi into an irrelevant regional player.

Following the Doha-Riyadh patch up, Khaled Al Mishri, the head of Libya's High Council of State, welcomed the move, saying a comprehensive Gulf reconciliation may contribute to the accomplishment of the United Nations' efforts to reach a political solution to the Libyan crisis.

In short, this new development in the Gulf could also have a positive impact on Turkey's ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as the wider GCC members, depending on mutual willingness. Besides, the new American administration will be very vigilant in its approach toward the Middle East and the Gulf as it prioritises Iran, and in initial days may focus more on Iran as compared to other Arab states, which it seems as more amenable to its new policies. Indications in this regard have already been shown by the Saudi leadership and other Arab states may follow suit, once Biden is firmly in the saddle.

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
Asad Mirza is a political commentator based in New Delhi

On December 19, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu received the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on live television. This kicked off a high-paced national vaccination campaign that has seen more than a million Israelis, some 12 percent of the country's population, receive the jab in less than two weeks – the highest rate in the world.

Multiple factors paved the way for Israel to take the lead in the global vaccination race. Being a relatively small country – both by land area and population – certainly helped. Having a digitised national healthcare system which requires all citizens to be registered also contributed. Moreover, unlike other states, the Israeli government did not hesitate to recruit the army to help with the administration and distribution of the vaccine. There is also a political dimension to the fast roll out – Netanyahu is fighting for political survival and winning the vaccine race might tip the balance in his favour in the upcoming March elections.

But there is a dark side to Israel's "vaccine success story": While it is immunising its citizens against COVID-19 at an unrivalled rate, the Israeli government is not doing anything to vaccinate millions of Palestinians living under its military occupation. In a cruel irony, hundreds of doses on the cusp of expiration were reportedly thrown away in Israeli clinics last week, while millions of Palestinians are being denied the vaccine.

Indeed, while the vaccine roll-out in Israel includes the Palestinian citizens of Israel, it does not include some five million Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza.

Since 1967, these two Palestinian territories have been under Israel's military occupation, with the latter also suffering from a blockade since 2007.

Among many things, this regime of absolute control has had a direct and detrimental effect not only on Palestinians' access to healthcare but also the quality of the care on offer in the West Bank and Gaza.

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Israel's occupation has left the Palestinian healthcare system undersupplied and with insufficient medical facilities. For years, rather than being allowed to develop self-sufficiency, Palestinians living in the occupied territories were forced to rely on outside help to meet their

The Dark Side Of Israel's Vaccine Success Story

Israel is refusing to provide the vaccine to the millions of Palestinians it is forcefully ruling over.

YARA HAWARI

most basic healthcare needs.

Thus, when COVID-19 hit, the Palestinian authorities were in no shape to implement effective pandemic mitigation strategies or procure the necessary medications and vaccines to protect Palestinians.

The Palestinian Authority (PA) is yet to secure a sufficient quantity of vaccinations to immunise the Palestinian population against COVID-19. And due to its dire financial situation, it will need significant outside help to make any substantial purchase.

Several PA officials have mentioned the possibility of obtaining a quantity from the COVAX programme, the WHO-led scheme to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to poorer countries. But it is likely this will take a long time – the vaccines intended for COVAX have not yet gained "emergency use" approval by the WHO, a precondition for distribution to begin.

In early December, the PA also claimed it reached a deal with Russia to receive some four million doses of its Sputnik V vaccine in the coming weeks. However, Russian officials recently notified the PA they do not yet have enough supplies to fulfil non-domestic orders.

All this would not have mattered, if Israel met its legal, moral and humanitarian obligation to vaccinate the Palestinians living under its military occupation.

The Israeli officials are trying to evade responsibility by claiming the PA is yet to ask Israel for assistance in procuring the vaccine, and that, under the Oslo accords which never came to fruition, all vaccination programmes in the West Bank should be led by the PA.

Yet this ignores the fact that Article 56 of the Fourth Geneva Convention specifically provides that an occupier

has the duty of ensuring "the adoption and application of the prophylactic and preventive measures necessary to combat the spread of contagious diseases and epidemics". In other words, the Israeli regime has a legal obligation to procure a sufficient amount of COVID-19 vaccines for Palestinians living under its military occupation.

Furthermore, both Israeli and international law ban Israel from allowing the distribution of a vaccine in Gaza and the West Bank that it has not approved for its own population. So, Israel is not only responsible for vaccinating Palestinians living in the occupied territories, but it also has a legal obligation to ensure the vaccines they eventually receive meet the approval criteria of the Israeli healthcare system.

Since the beginning of this unprecedented global public health emergency, however, Israel not only refused to live up to its clearly defined legal obligations to the Palestinian people but also created a false picture in which it is working with the PA to defeat the virus.

In March last year, for example, when it "allowed" the entry of medical supplies and equipment into Gaza, Israel received praise from the likes of the UN for "cooperating" with the Palestinians with regard to tackling COVID-19.

In effect, the Israeli regime, which singlehandedly depleted the capabilities of the Palestinian healthcare system through its decades-long military occupation, was being praised for allowing a few medical supplies donated by international actors to be transported into Gaza. This, despite its responsibility under international law as an occupying power to provide the supplies itself.

Creating the impression that Israel is helping the

Palestinians in good faith to tackle the virus while keeping them under occupation, was a remarkable achievement of the Israeli propaganda machine. But this is not surprising considering that Israel had hid the violence of its regime with such illusions for decades.

Indeed, Israel is often praised by the international community and media for letting the odd Palestinian patient from Gaza receive treatment in Tel Aviv hospitals. In these "feel good" stories, however, the real reason why Palestinians need to go to Israel to receive treatment is seldom mentioned: The crippling military siege that prevents local hospitals from obtaining the necessary equipment and supplies to provide treatment themselves.

No doubt, whenever the PA succeeds in securing a vaccine shipment, this achievement will once again be presented to the international community as a sign of "great coordination" between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Indeed, to deliver the vaccines to the Palestinians living in occupied territories, the PA will need to coordinate with the Israeli regime, which maintains full control over everything going in and out of the West Bank and Gaza. Hence, when and if the Israelis "allow" the vaccines to be delivered to the Palestinians, they will likely be hailed by many in the international community for "cooperating" and "coordinating" with the Palestinians.

The Palestinians, of course, are not the only ones who were practically kicked out of the vaccine race even before it started. Most countries in the Global South have also been left out of the race, with most of the vaccine doses that will be available in the short-term being allocated to rich nations that have the funds, and the political might, to buy them. But Israel's military occupation, and unrivalled control over the Palestinian population, makes the challenge facing the authorities in the West Bank and Gaza especially formidable.

Places like the occupied territories, where the health infrastructure is weak and it is difficult to maintain basic social distancing or hygiene requirements, should be prioritised in vaccination efforts. And yet, because of prevailing structures of oppression, they won't be.

So as the world watches Israel's speedy vaccination program in awe, it must not ignore the bigger picture – that the Israeli regime is refusing to provide the vaccine to the millions of people it is forcefully ruling over.

Social Media and Data Privacy

KHALID MUSTAFA

Deleting the application is never a solution as we may need it and our businesses are running over it, but using the same in a precautionary manner is worth a lot

In recent days, we have all suddenly become worried about data and privacy issues, even as we'd compromised much of it in previous years. Even as we'd been compromising data and privacy on Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram and other social media sites, we've now paid more attention because of the recent fallout in whatsapp's new privacy policy.

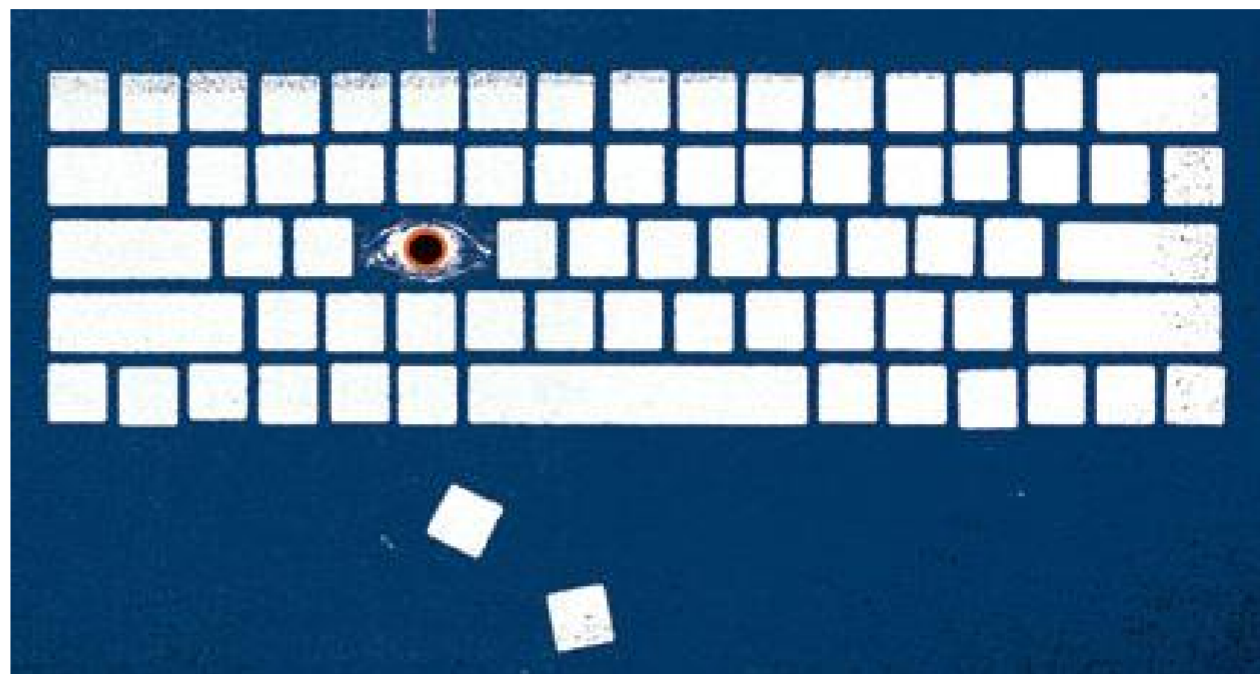
In every scenario of real life or virtual life (Cyber World), we have many possibilities of someone committing cyber crimes.

Hackers are always ready to steal our data and keep track on our activities, we are always afraid of being victims. In that very time, we should always take various precautionary measures to avoid being victims of such things. The OEM of applications, software developers, websites at first share all the terms and conditions of the applications and guidelines for its usage towards personal or commercial use but how many of us are reading those terms and conditions matters a lot.

Whenever we access any website we all get a message of acceptance of cookies on the website and we simply click on agree to visit the website before reading what those cookies are talking about. Cookies are useful to websites but can be vulnerable for the users who access the website as they can store your logins, search history and more and someone can spy your data and activities without your consent. Infact, by the acceptance of cookies you get personalised advertisements over social media and other websites.

Now, if we talk about the applications, there are many applications other than WhatsApp which are storing and tracking our personal information and for which we have already provided them the permission during installation of applications. For instance, even your photo editor application wants your permission to access your personalized photo gallery and locations. We cannot abandon these things or stop using the applications as we are in need for those in day to day life but we can protect ourselves from being victims of any hacking or data privacy accidents.

For the same, we need to follow some protocols and read privacy policies of every website and application very well. As per the Global Web Index March 2020, there are about 19% of the social media



users who have not taken action regarding protecting privacy. 38% have reduced the personal sharing of information on social media just 31% read the terms and conditions and 11% have deleted the social media applications.

We should be very much careful while sharing any of our personal information over chats, social media video calls, photographs, passwords, bank information, allowing 3rd party apps to access your social media accounts etc as you may come under the attack of hackers and be victims to them and they can easily broadcast and morph our information.

The application/website OEMs are well aware about the security and take much more precautions and have security system, encryption, OTP accessing to avoid such misfortunes to the users but they can't eradicate it completely as every hour they get new challenging hacker attacks and new virus formations in digital form and work 24x7 for the users.

So, there are responsibilities in the hands of the users as well.

Some of the key points you should take into consideration when using social media is to check your privacy protection, know who is in your friendslist, what you are sharing is for private or

visible to the public, what sort of videos / personal photos you are sharing.

We should take a review of everything and then use the application. Deleting the application is never a solution as we may need it and our businesses are running over it, but using the same in a precautionary manner is worth a lot.

We are now addicted to social media and have left conventional means. The sharing of information in a digital form is more vulnerable to theft. On our personal laptops and computers, we have various Internet security antivirus softwares available for PDAs, iPads, tablets and mobile phones which can act as a 3rd party to guide and protect you from accessing vulnerable websites and applications and provide information about securing your personal data.

Not only WhatsApp which is currently in news headlines, even Google, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snapchat, and many more all have access to highly sensitive private data, which is stored on their servers and could be stolen anytime now.

Choice is always ours as when information gets posted online, it is no longer private, and may end up falling into wrong hands and can end up leaking

your personal information. Your online data is as important as your passport, ID card and your confidential medical record. So, basic education about the usage of the internet, social media platforms is a must as even hackers have trespassed the privacy of various celebrities on which there is more tracking.

In the end, you can't blame the company as you have already given them permission to store your data on their servers and have given permission to access several of the modules of your phone information like accessing location, gallery, files and even camera during the first installation of applications and softwares. Read "Terms and Conditions" very well to have your personal conditions healthy over the cyber world.

Government of India has already issued various advisories to public for using social media and being on the internet about reporting cybercrimes, child abuse etc. If you are victim to it, do not feel any stress. We should immediately report to the country cybercrime portal and they will take necessary actions.

The author is an IT & Management Expert. Presently IT-Ops Manager At HK Nissan. For feedback: er.khalidmustafashah@gmail.com

Five Ways To Help Your Child Develop A Love For Reading

ISANG AWAH

Love for reading can be hugely valuable for children. The benefits of leisure reading include increased general knowledge, a positive impact on academic achievement, enhanced reading ability and vocabulary growth.

Indeed, research suggests that time spent reading for pleasure could be a key indicator for the future success of a child – even more important than their family's socio-economic status. It is therefore not surprising that many parents are interested in getting their children hooked on books.

But certain reading practices used by parents and teachers could end up putting children off reading. On the other hand, though, there is compelling evidence that children who may not want to read for pleasure can be influenced to take it up.

My PhD research, which explored the reading habits of a group of children in a book club aged between nine and 12, uncovered ways to entice children to develop a love for leisure reading.

Read aloud (and make it exciting)

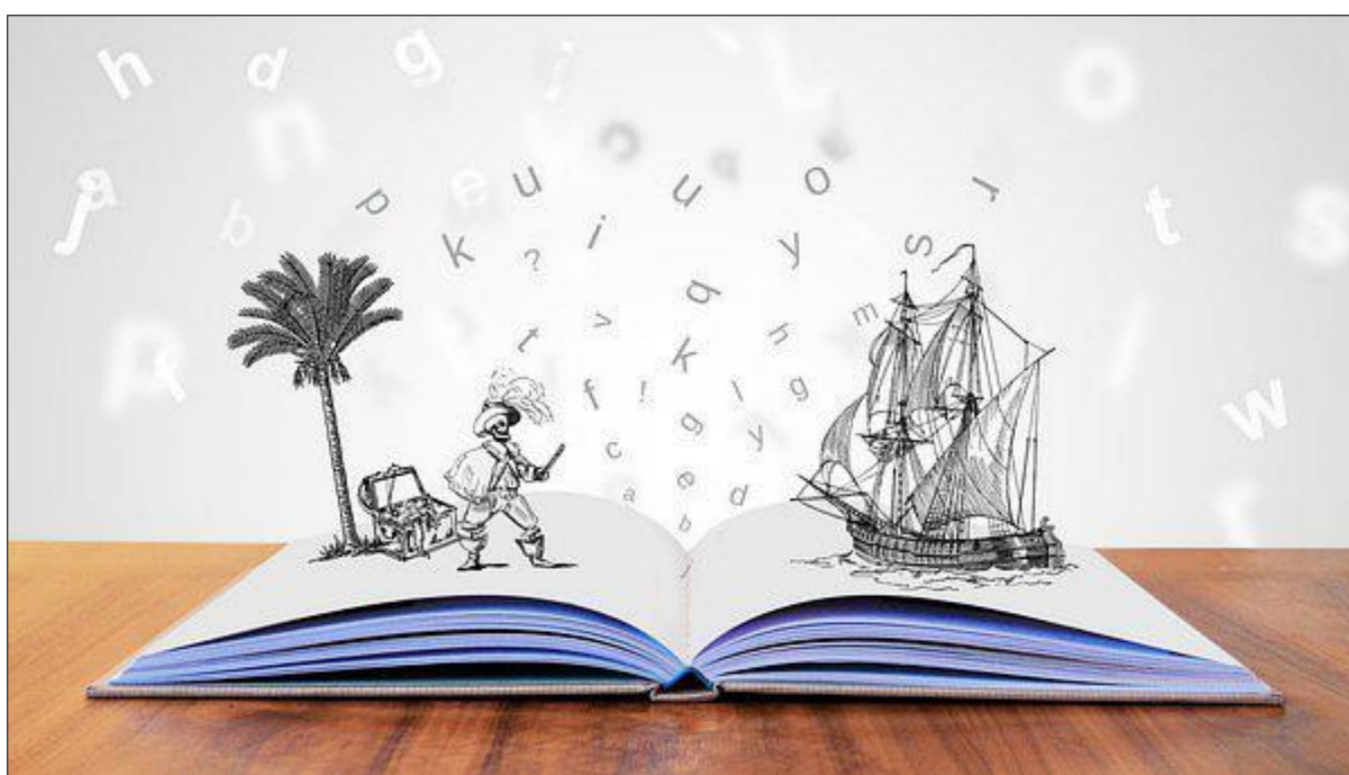
Reading aloud fosters a love of books in children, and helps children get hooked on books as they associate reading with pleasure.

My study supports this. Each day, a staff member at the book club read aloud to the children. Most of the children said that they enjoyed being read to, and that having someone read to them stirred their interest in the book. A boy in my study said his parents regularly read aloud to him when he was little, and that this led to his love for reading.

However, some children pointed out that how books are read aloud could affect their enjoyment of the reading. It is important that the reading be done in an enthusiastic way that children find engaging.

Ensure access to books

Children who have easy access to engaging texts do more reading.



Although there were a few exceptions, the children in my study who had many reading materials at home and at school did more leisure reading and were more engaged readers than those who had challenges in accessing books. A little girl said she loved comics but could not get hold of them easily. She believed she would do more reading if she could readily get the books she liked.

Parents who may not be able to buy books for their child could take the child to a public library and assist the child in borrowing books. Another option could be downloading suitable free e-books for children to read.

Create a space for reading

It is important to establish a comfortable space and conducive atmosphere for

To enable children to fully engage with and take pleasure from reading, parents should create a comfortable and quiet space for reading. This could be as simple as a corner in a room which could be decorated as the reading space. This will encourage children to pick up a book and spend some time in the reading corner.

reading as well as set aside time for leisure reading.

The reading engagement of the children in my study was affected by environmental factors such as noise, heat, disruptions, and uncomfortable seats. The findings also show that children are likely to read happily and for a longer time when they are in a reading environment.

To enable children to fully engage with and take pleasure from reading, parents should create a comfortable and quiet space for reading. This could be as simple as a corner in a room which could be decorated as the reading space. This will encourage children to pick up a book and spend some time in the reading corner.

Let children choose books

In my study, the children better enjoyed reading and did more leisure reading when they chose their books. When forced to read a book selected by a parent or teacher, they did not always enjoy the reading and sometimes did not read the books. A girl complained that she usually did not like the books her class teacher selected for leisure reading. "Sometimes I manage it, sometimes I don't read it," she said. Other children had similar complaints.

The freedom to select books leads to a positive attitude towards reading, better engagement with the book, and a more enjoyable reading experience.

Additionally, children should be allowed to read whatever materials they find interesting, be it comics, magazines, or poetry. Doing otherwise may reduce their potential to engage in recreational reading.

Talk about books

Having discussions about books is another way to spark children's interest in reading and in books. However, these should centre on books that might appeal to the child rather than on the books you as an adult find engaging.

Many of the children in my study said that book discussions with parents, friends, and staff members of the book club had led them to read certain books. Some of the them reported that they enjoyed reading the books recommended by one staff member or the other.

Children who may not be interested in reading will have subjects and topics that they are excited about, such as sports, movies or animals. Discussing books on a topic or subject that the child finds exciting will likely whet their appetite for that book.

When children find reading fun and enjoyable, they are likely to repeatedly spend time with books, become engaged readers, and gain the benefits of leisure reading.

By arrangements with The Conversation

CASE STUDY

Education is the third eye of a child

RESHMA EKKKA

Education is the third eye of a child" as rightly told by Prof. Achyuta Samanta, Founder-KIIT & KISS, now we really feel it.

KISS is the world's largest residential tribal University, home to thirty thousand indigenous students who are provided nutrition, holistic formal & vocational education from KG to PG absolutely free of cost. It was established in 1992-93 by renowned educationist & social activist Prof. Dr. Achyuta Samanta. Further it is the embodiment of empowerment of the marginalized, underprivileged group of students who have become change agents for their communities by providing emancipation from acute poverty through education.

Life flows on in its myriad path with its ups & downs with the passage of time. Human being's position is just like a straw in this flow of eternal time. Further, man has no strength to stop this process. This is the story of Reshma Ekka. She was born to Islam Ekka of remote Ramjodi village of Lathikatha block in Sundergrh district. He braved the multifarious challenges & struggles of life with a lot of pa-

tiency. Islam was a poor person with five members in the family to feed. He often struggled to arrange two square meals a day for his family. Being a landless farmer, he had to support his family working as a farm labourer. His children also had to help him in this effort. Islam's younger daughter Reshma had a lot of interest to study. Often, she used to implore her father to help her study. Though quite young, she was determined to turn around her family's fortune when she would grow up. But the hapless father could ill afford her studies.

Life took for the better when Reshma's father came to know about KISS at Bhubaneswar, where every care is taken for the poor marginalized children from the tribal community. His joy knew no bounds when he realized that there is light at the end of the tunnel for her daughter. His eyes sparkled with the light of hope that finally Reshma could get education, that too with free boarding & lodging facility. Islam got Reshma admitted into KISS in class-I. But fate had ordained something else. Islam could not remain alive to see his daughter succeed in life. Once, when Reshma had come home in the summer vacation while study-

ing in class- II, learnt that her dear father had passed away leaving her as an orphan. Though she got the shock of her life, yet she returned to KISS to continue her studies amidst her classmates & loving care of the teachers. Years had rolled by.

Now, Reshma is studying in class-VI, having topped her class in class -V. In addition to formal education, KISS has also introduced life skills. She is also getting the opportunity to develop her art, culture & language. She is looking towards the future with new hope in her eyes. She is taking part in many extracurricular activities like elocution competitions & drawing contests. She wants to become the change agent for her entire community & play the role model for children of her community. She is convinced that right education is the panacea of all sorrow & poverty.

She is aware, had it not been for KISS, she would not have been anywhere. KISS is her life. It is Prof. Samanta who has been hand holding the poor disadvantaged children like her & equipping them with a new lease of life. Because of KISS, Reshma is progressing in the path of progress.

Due to the present Corona pan-

demical situation, Reshma has gone back to her village. But she feels that the pandemic has not been able to derail her from the path of progress. She is happy that KISS has been regularly providing food, study materials to her during these difficult times. She hopes to rejoin her school after the pandemic is over & try to make her father's dreams come true.

This case study is an apt example of empowering girl students in the current social transformation process. It is proved that education bridges the gaps & creates new opportunities for the disadvantaged groups. Given the opportunity, anybody can excel provided he/she has the right intention & determination. This is time & again replicated in tribal dominated hinterlands of our country. It is very important to bring them into the mainstream of society while helping them to protect their own culture & life to bring together a holistic equilibrium in spreading unity in diversity.

Sustainable development has been at the core of KISS programmes since the very beginning. It is also shared by the students to have a vision for a world free from poverty, hunger and illiteracy.

--- CHINMAYA KUMAR DAS

Google introduces 'Guest Mode' on smart speakers

Google has brought Guest Mode to its smart speakers like Nest Hub and Nest Mini, that will work as a public Google Assistant terminal. 'Guest Mode' is another easy way to control your privacy on smart speakers and Smart Displays.

Just say, "Hey Google, turn on Guest Mode," and Google Assistant interactions will not be saved to your account.

"While in Guest Mode, you can enjoy popular features, like asking questions, controlling smart

home devices, setting timers and playing music. Your device won't show personal results, like your calendar entries or contacts, until you turn the mode off," Google said in a statement. -Agencies

Last year, the company added a way to adjust how sensitive Google Assistant is to the phrase "Hey Google," giving the users more ways to reduce unintentional activations.

Once 'Guest Mode' has been turned on, the device will play a special chime and show a guest icon on the display.

'Guest Mode' will stay on

until you choose to turn it off. "When you're ready, say 'Hey Google, turn off Guest Mode' to return to your full, personalised Google Assistant experience. "When you use your Assistant in Guest Mode to interact with other apps and services, like Google Maps, YouTube or media and smart home services, those apps may still save that activity".

'Guest Mode' is now available on Google Nest speakers and displays in English, and will come to more languages and devices in the next few months, the company said.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Civil Secretariat, J&K, Jammu/Srinagar

Email: msJkmgndreg@gmail.com secyrd11@qmail.com
Tel. No. 0191-2564763

No:-RD/MGNREGA/17/2021

Dated:- 14 .01.2021

Advertisement Notice No. 04

Applications are invited as per annexed format from eligible persons for the post of Ombudsperson under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA for engagement in districts of UT of J&K.

Total No. of posts: 06 (One Ombudsperson for two districts) as per following break up:-

Districts	Post
Rajouri & Poonch	01
Doda & Kishtwar	01
Kupwara & Baramulla	01
Ganderbal & Bandipora	01
Anantnag & Pulwama	01
Kulgam & Shopian	01

Eligibility:

- The candidate must be a domicile of UT of J&K. In case of a person retired from government service last post held should not be below the rank of Additional Secretary.
- The applicant must be of eminent standing and impeccable integrity with at least 20 years of experience in Public Administration, Law, Academics, Social Work or Management. Experience of working with people or community organizations is a mandatory qualification.
- No person who is a member of the recognized political party or a banned organization shall be considered for appointment as Ombudsperson.
- The applicant should be physically active and capable of conducting field tours, inspections and visit to remote rural locations in the district, and also travel between districts of her/his responsibility.
- The Ombudsperson is to be appointed for the tenure of two years extendible not more than twice by one year each based on a performance appraisal process or till the incumbent attains the age of 68 years, whichever is earlier. There shall be no re-appointment.

Remuneration:

Subject to any subsequent notification by the Union Territory of J&K, the Ombudsperson shall be allowed compensation, in form of fee of Rs. 1000/- (Rupees One Thousand Only) per sitting with maximum upper limit of Rs. 20000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand Only) per month.

The application form complete in all respects must reach this office within 15 days from the date of publication of this Advertisement notice at the following address through registered post.

**Additional Secretary to Government
(Member Secretary, Mahatma Gandhi NREGA-SEGC)
Room No. 15, 4th Floor,
Mini Block, Civil Secretariat, Jammu**

Application received after last date shall not be accepted.

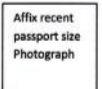
(Pran singh)

DIPK-11840/20

Additional Secretary to the Government

Proforma for Application

Advertisement Notice No. & date _____
Name _____
Parentage _____
Sex _____
Permanent Address _____
Address for Correspondence _____
Mobile No. _____
Email Id _____



Age as on 01.01.2021	Supporting Document Enclosed (Yes/No)
Qualification	
Working experience in relevant field _____ Years	
Administrative Experience _____ Years	
Experience in Rural Development Department as _____ Years	
Post Graduation in Rural Development	
Domicile	

The application must be accompanied with all the necessary supporting documents.

Declaration

I, hereby declare that the information provided as above is correct and true to the best of my knowledge, if at any stage it is proved/found that the information provided by me is wrong, my candidature for the said post shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab initio, besides initiating legal proceedings against me.

No. of Documents Enclosed: _____

Date: _____

Signature of the candidate _____
Name of the candidate: _____

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, IRRIGATION DIVISION, KULGAM.

E-NIT NO:- 13 of 2020-21

Dated:- 11/01/2021.

E- TENDER FOR

"Construction, Testing and successful commissioning of Lift Irrigation Scheme PETH DEVSAR (Upper Qasbi Devsar)" under NABARD.

- Bid Security: Declaration as per Annexure - A.
- Completion Period: Twenty Four calendar Months & shall be reckoned from the date of issue of letter of Intent or Allotment, whichever is earlier.
- Bidding Document Fee: Rs. 5000.00 (Rupees five thousands five hundred Only) in the form of Demand draft (bidders other than UT of J&K) & e-challan/Treasury Challan/receipt (non - refundable/Non- transferable) in favor of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Kulgam.
- The Bidding documents consisting of eligibility criteria, specification, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms & conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the e-procurement Portal "http://www.jktenders.gov.in" and also on departmental web site "ifckashmir.com" as per schedule of dates given below:-

	Date of publishing of Tender Notice	12/01/2021
	Date of downloading of bidding documents	13/01/2021 from 10.00 AM
	Date, Time & Venue of Pre-bid meeting	18/01/2021 at 11.00am in the office of Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Anantnag.
	Last date of submission of pre-bid queries if any	20/01/2021
	Bid submission start date	13/01/2021 from 10.00 AM
	Bid Submission end date	28/01/2021 up to 04.00 PM
	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (on line)	29/01/2021 at 3.00 PM
	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids (on line)	Shall be notified after evaluation of technical bids.

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir.

Notice Inviting e-Tender

E-NIT No:- 13 of 2020-21

Date:- 11/01/2021

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of J&K Union Territory e-tenders (Two cover System), are invited from reputed and resourceful "AAY" class contractors/Firms/companies/joint venture of reputed on item rate basis, which should be uploaded on the e-Procurement web portal http://www.jktenders.gov.in, up to last bidding date:- 28/01/2021 up to 4.00 p.m for the subjected work referred below and as per the details mentioned in this e-tender notification and to whom all the terms and conditions of detailed NIT / Tender Documents/ PWD Form NO:- 25 are accepted. The detailed tender document, Specifications and drawings can be downloaded on the e-procurement Portal http://www.jktenders.gov.in and also on departmental web site "ifckashmir.com". The cost of tender document in the form of Demand draft (bidders other than UT of J&K) & e-challan/Treasury Challan/receipt remitted to MH 0701/0702 (non - refundable/Non- transferable) in favor of Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Kulgam.

S.No	Name of work	Adv. Cost of Work	Bid Security	Class of Contract	Cost of Tender Doc.	Period of completion	Position of AAA	Position of funds	Tender receiving authority
1	Construction, Testing and successful commissioning of Lift Irrigation Scheme Peth Devsar (Upper Qasbi Devsar) under NABARD	Rs 271.70	Declaration as per Annexure - A	Class A & Above	5500/=	24 calendar Months	Accorded	Partly available	Superintending Engineer Hydraulic Circle Anantnag.

2.0 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION OF TENDERERS:-

2.1 For Single /individual bidder entity

2.1.1 TECHNICAL

- The contractor should possess the experience of having successfully completed similar works like Lift Irrigation Schemes and other similar hydraulic/ drainage works, during last seven years ending 31/12/2020 which should be any one of the following:-
 - One similar work costing not less than 80% of advertised cost during the last Seven years.
 - Two similar works costing not less than 50% of advertised cost each, during the last Seven years.
 - Three similar works costing not less than the 40% of advertised cost each, during the last Seven years.

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir.

DIPK-11759/20

Executive Engineer,
Irrigation Division,
Kulgam

NO:- 3228-50

Date:- 11/01/2021

SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION. OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION

TENDER NOTICE INVITING E- TENDERS

NIET NO: 31 e-Tendering/2020-21

Dated: 14-01-2021

For and on behalf of the Srinagar Municipal Corporation, e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors for the following work:-

S.No.	Name of work	Est. Cost (In Lacs)	Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable)	Earnest money	Time of Completion in days/ Weeks	Class of Contract (Civil)	Head of Account
1.	Face-Lifting of Commissioner's Office Building at SMC, Srinagar	1.90	200/-	3800/-	7 days strictly	DEE	14 th Finance Commission / NO.SMC/Plg/2020-21/696 Dated 10-09-2020

1	Publish date	14-01-2021	04:00 PM
2	Document download	15-01-2020	10:00AM To 22-01-2021 04:00PM
3	Bid submission/uploading date	15-01-2021	10:00AM To 22-01-2021 01:00PM
4	Bid Opening date	22-01-2021	02:00 PM
5	Submission of hardcopy for successful bidder	23-01-2021	upto 4.00 PM

- Other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

Note: The intended bidders have to deposit the tender fee in the Municipal Account No: 021601020000007 payable at J&K Bank Brach Balgarden, before uploading of their bids and scanned copy of the same (with NIET No & Serial no. mentioned) to be uploaded along with all other documents prescribed in the NIET while uploading their bids and also upload the CDR, Bank Receipt.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

- The performance security for unbalanced tenders shall be 3% of the contract value as per circular instructions issued by the finance department of GO JK vide No. A/Min's (2018) -111-895 /J Dated 22-12-2020.
- The successful bidders/tenders should submit the hard copies of their documents like CDR/DD etc. after the opening of tenders.
- In case of Holidays/office happens to be closed on the date of opening of bids. Bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue
- 3(a) the intending tenderer/bidder should attach sales tax clearance certificate with upto date validation without which no tenders/bids will be entertained.
- The bid shall be opened online in the Office of Executive Engineer LRWD, SMC at Old Funds Office Building Karan Nagar near National School Municipal Park on 18-11-2020 2:00 PM.
- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of demand draft pledged in favor of Chief Account Officer SMC payable at Srinagar and Earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer LRWD SMC the bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.

No: SMC/EELRWD/4606-4617
Dated: 14-01-2021

Executive Engineer,
Left River Works Division,
Srinagar Municipal Corporation.
DIPK-NB-5145/20

Director Reviews Flagship Agri Programs

SRINAGAR: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Muhammad Iqbal Chowdhary today convened a meeting here to review implementation of flagship programmes under agriculture sector.

The Director on the occasion reviewed submission of DPRs on Micro Food Processing Enterprise Scheme (FME), Self Help Groups, progress on Farm Produce Organizations (FPOs), status of DBT in respect of CSS/Capex, Machinery distributed during 2020-21.

Besides he also reviewed progress under soil health card scheme, status of registration of new FPOs viz submission of DPRs, preparation of Kharief 2020-21 (Seed requirements of all crops), status of operationalization of web portal for online registration process for issuance of new/ renewal of pesticides and fertilizer license, quality analysis of insecticides, pesticides and fertilizers.

Director Agriculture impressed upon the officers to ensure that the budgetary allocations to their respective districts under different schemes and programs are fully utilized adding that the funds under different programs are for farmer's welfare and it should reach to the farmers without delay.

Chowdhary stressed upon the officers to adhere strictly to the guidelines of different schemes and programs and

ensure that undue liabilities are not created.

He said the Department should make all effort to ensure the availability of market for the farmers produce. He directed Chief Agriculture Officers/ District Agriculture Officers to pay periodic visits to the concerned areas to personally monitor the development pace.

He highlighted the need for a multi-dimensional marketing strategy concept so that the produce of the farmer could be marketed in a very effective manner. He said the Department is planning a pan Kashmir drive to organize special training programs for educated youth to adopt global skill in the agriculture sector.

During the meeting a detailed power point presentation regarding procurement on GeM portal was given to the officers to adhere to guidelines issued by Government for achieving accountable and transparent results.

Joint Director Agriculture (Extension) Mohammad Muzaffar Hurra, Joint Director Inputs/Marketing/PHM Amir U Din Andrabi, Joint Director Agriculture Engineering M. Ilyas Khateeb, Joint Director Farms, Spices & Medicinal Plants Kousar Parveen, Joint Director Seeds, Pesticides and Fertilizers Mohammad Iqbal Khan besides all Chief Agriculture Officers and other concerned officer of the Department attended the meeting.



UN Agency Predicts "Prolonged Depressed Demand" For Air Travel In 2021

Agencies

MONTREAL, CANADA: The UN aviation agency on Friday predicted "prolonged depressed demand" for air travel and more financial troubles for airlines, following a year of fewer flights and big losses blamed on the pandemic.

Air travel plunged 60 percent in 2020 as nations closed borders and restricted travel to slow the spread of Covid-19, the International Civil Aviation Organization said in a report.

The near-term outlook, it said, "is for prolonged depressed demand, with downside risks to global air travel recovery predominating in the first quarter of 2021, and likely to be subject to further deterioration."

With just 1.8 billion passengers taking to the air during the first year of the pandemic, com-

pared to 4.5 billion in 2019, airline losses reached US\$370 billion, according to ICAO figures.

Airports and air navigation services providers lost a further US\$115 billion and US\$13 billion, respectively.

And severe liquidity strains, the ICAO said, are now "placing the industry's financial viability in question and threatening millions of jobs around the world."

The situation has also been devastating for tourism, given that half of international holiday-makers used air travel in the past. A recovery, the ICAO said, will hinge on the successful rollout of vaccines, which have now started to be distributed.

Several governments have also provided or are in talks with carriers about bailouts.

The plunge in air travel began in January 2020, but was

limited to a few countries. As the novel coronavirus spread, air transport "came to a virtual standstill" by the end of March, the ICAO said.

A month later, with the introduction of wide-scale lockdowns, border closures and travel restrictions around the world, passenger numbers dropped 92 percent from 2019 levels.

Passenger traffic then saw a moderate rebound during the usually busy summer travel period, but again dropped off in the last four months of 2020, coinciding with a second wave of Covid-19 infections triggering fresh restrictions.

The ICAO noted that domestic travel has demonstrated stronger resilience, particularly in China and Russia, where passenger numbers have already returned to the pre-pandemic levels.

Indian Economy 'Weak', Credit Growth Bottoming Out: Report



MUMBAI: American brokerage BofA Securities on Friday said the Indian economy continues to be "weak", pointing to activity indicators tracked by it.

On the positive side, the brokerage said credit demand is bottoming out and the real lending rates adjusted for wholesale price inflation are falling.

It can be noted that there has been a slew of reports lately about a stronger recovery being underway after the jolt caused by the pandemic. The government expects the GDP to contract 7.7 per cent in financial year 2021 because of the reverses.

"The bad news is that the continued drop in our BofA India Activity Indicator reinforces our view that the economy still remains weak," the brokerage said in a note.

The indicator fell by (-) 0.6 per cent in November on top of the (-) 0.8 per cent in October, and 4.6 per cent drop in the September quarter, it said, adding, "this supports our call of GVA (gross value added) contractions of (-) 1 per cent in the December quarter and (-) 6.7 per cent in FY21."

On the credit growth front, it said the rise in banking system

advances seems to have bottomed out and the system will close with a growth of 6.2 per cent in the financial year 2021.

The credit growth for financial year 2022 will come at 12 per cent, it said. It can be noted that credit growth had been declining for the last few years, in sync with a dip in the overall economic growth which has been on the downward spiral since demonetisation in late 2016 as borrowers went slow on expansion.

The real lending rates adjusted for WPI will be one of the prime reasons for the faster credit growth estimate in financial year 2022, the brokerage said.

Nominal MCLR (marginal cost of funding based lending rate) is down 1.45 per cent since March 2019 and the real MCLR (adjusted for WPI) is down 1.50 per cent on RBI easing and the core WPI inflation inching up further to 3.1 per cent from 2.3 per cent in November 2020.

The RBI has cut interest rates in two moves after the emergence of the pandemic but has kept rates on hold for the last three consecutive policy reviews because of high consumer price inflation. — PTI

Newsprint Cost Up 20% In Last 3 Months, Publishers Seek Waiver In Customs Duty

NEW DELHI: Newsprint cost has jumped 20 per cent in the last three months due to demand-supply imbalance post pandemic, prompting news publishers to petition the government for waiver of 5 per cent import duty to help cut cost.



The industry has been hit hard due to COVID-19 led disruptions and the most newspapers have stopped sending newspapers to rural areas where there is less than 50 copies to reduce the distribution cost, said the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) President L Adimoolam.

In a representation to the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday ahead of the forthcoming union budget, INS has suggested to take steps as to reduce the customs duty on import of newsprints, a stimulus package for the industry or at least to help the publications by releasing advertisement with an increased tariff of 50 per cent.

"If working out a stimulus package for print media is difficult at this juncture, DAVP (Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity) may please consider releasing advertisement for all its departments to all publications with an increased tariff of 50 per cent, which would be highly helpful for the industry as a whole," the INS representation said.

It has also asked to extend the validity of RNI (Registrar of Newspapers for India) Circulation Certificates up to March 31, 2022 which will enable DAVP rates to remain the same till next year.

It is estimated that the print media would take two or three years to recover from the current situation, the INS added.

When asked about the situation, Adimoolam told PTI: "We have been asking for the stimulus package. The government is helping a few industries with stimulus packages. We are (also) expecting some stimulus." Several newspapers have taken cost-cutting efforts and many editions are closed, the number of pages has been reduced and people have lost jobs. Several small papers have also closed down, Adimoolam added.

According to him, the newspaper distribution has become very costly. "Sending newspaper to remote and small villages is being slowly reduced. The newspaper reaches only to a nearby town. Villages would be deprived of the news," he said.

After the pandemic, reportedly 3 million tonnes of newsprint capacities have been closed or converted to brown paper grades worldwide, resulting in a demand-supply imbalance.

The Indian publishers continue to be dependent on imported newsprint, due to insufficient domestic capacity/output and poor quality.

"Prices of newsprint have shot up by 20 per cent in the last 3 months. Another increase of 10-15 per cent is in the anvil next month which will severely impact the Publishers," said the INS in the memorandum adding that domestic producers are severely under-stocked on their raw materials to supply adequate quantities. PTI

WhatsApp Delays Data-Sharing Change After Backlash

Agencies

SAN FRANCISCO: WhatsApp on Friday postponed a data-sharing change as users concerned about privacy fled the Facebook-owned messaging service and flocked to rivals Telegram and Signal.

The smartphone app, a huge hit across the world, canceled its February 8 deadline for accepting an update to its terms concerning sharing data with Facebook, saying it would use the pause to clear up misinformation around privacy and security. "We've heard from so many people how much confusion there is around our recent update," WhatsApp said in a blog post.

"This update does not expand our ability to share data with Facebook." It said it would instead "go to people gradually to review the policy at their own pace before new business options are available on May 15."

The update concerns how merchants using WhatsApp to chat with customers can share data with Facebook, which could use the information for targeted ads, according to the social network.

"We can't see your private messages or hear your calls, and neither can Facebook," WhatsApp said in an earlier blog post.

"We don't keep logs of who every-



one is messaging or calling. We can't see your shared location and neither can Facebook." Location data along with message contents is encrypted end-to-end, according to WhatsApp.

"We're giving businesses the option to use secure hosting services from Facebook to manage WhatsApp chats with their customers, answer questions, and send helpful information like purchase receipts," WhatsApp said in a post.

"Whether you communicate with a business by phone, email, or WhatsApp, it can see what you're saying and may use that information for its own marketing purposes, which may include advertising on Facebook."

Technology experts note that WhatsApp's new requirement of its users makes legally binding a policy that has been widely in use since 2016.

Facebook aims to monetize WhatsApp by allowing businesses to contact clients via the platform, making

it natural for the internet giant to centralize some data on its servers.

Countries concerned

The Turkish Competition Authority said it is opening an investigation and requiring WhatsApp to suspend the data sharing obligation on its users.

Several Turkish state organizations -- including President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's media office -- switched to Turkcell telecom's new messaging service BiP in response.

The terms of service tweak also put WhatsApp in the crosshairs in Italy and India, where a petition has been filed in a Delhi court.

WhatsApp's notice to users lacked clarity and its privacy implications need to be carefully evaluated, Italian data protection agency GPDP said in a post at its website.

GPDP said it has shared its concerns with the European Data Protection Board and reserved the right to intervene in the matter.

Facebook has come under increasing pressure from regulators as it tries to integrate its services.

The EU fined the US social media giant 110 million euros (then \$120 million) for providing incorrect and misleading information about its 2014 takeover of WhatsApp concerning the ability to link accounts between the services.

NEWS MAKERS

Maruti Suzuki Launches Online Financing Platform — Smart Finance

Maruti Suzuki India on Friday announced the launch of its online financing platform -- Smart Finance, for Maruti Suzuki ARENA customers across more than 30 cities.

A company statement said that with the launch of Smart Finance, 24 out of 26 steps in the customer vehicle purchase journey have been digitised.

"Smart Finance offers customers a 'ONE-STOP-SHOP' solution for the vehicle finance needs. The services include option to choose among wide range of finance products based on customer needs, selecting the best-suited loan product, completion of all finance related formalities and disbursement of loan, with just a few clicks," it said.



Maruti Suzuki website will act as a facilitator between the customer and the financier providing real time status updates and in turn provide a hassle free and transparent financing solution.

Going forward, different structured schemes such as balloon and step-up offers, among others can also be reviewed on one screen.

For this, Maruti Suzuki has currently partnered with twelve financiers -- State Bank of India, HDFC Bank, Mahindra Finance, ICICI Bank, IndusInd Bank, Bank of Baroda, Cholamandalam Finance, Kotak Mahindra Prime, Axis Bank, AU Small Finance Bank, Yes Bank and HDB Financial Services. Subsequently, the company will on-

board other key financiers, it said. Shashank Srivastava, Executive Director (Marketing & Sales), Maruti Suzuki India said: "We are overwhelmed with the response to our Smart Finance platform from our NEXA customers. Now, we want to extend the ease of a car buying journey for our ARENA customers as well. The pandemic situation in the country has further increased the usage of digital platforms. With Smart Finance, we aim to reach out to a larger audience, assist them and make every stage of the loan process transparent."

The Smart Finance service is now available for ARENA customers in over 30 cities including Delhi-NCR, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Pune, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Indore, Kolkata, Cochin, Chandigarh and Guwahati.

Apple India Store Announces Rs 5,000 Cashback Offer, No-cost EMI

NEW DELHI: Apple Store India, the company's online shop on Friday announced a new cashback and no-cost EMI offer.

Starting January 21, consumers can avail a cashback of Rs 5,000 on orders above Rs 44,900 in India as well as a no-cost EMI offer up to six months on Apple products.

According to Apple's website, the cashback is available for qualifying HDFC Bank Credit Cards.

Apple says that the maximum cashback of Rs 5,000 will be applicable on a single order that totals up to Rs 44,900 or more. Multiple orders cannot be combined for the cashback.

The cashback, once an order is successfully paid, will be credited to the user's HDFC credit card account



within a period of 7 days.

The offer cannot be clubbed with the Education Program offers and is valid only on a single item purchase once per card.

Much like the Rs 5,000 cashback offer, the no-cost EMI offer also ends on January 28, 2021.

Apple clarifies "Card eligibility subject to terms and conditions between you and your card issuing bank." The No-Cost EMI offer is applicable on HDFC Bank Credit Cards on EMI transactions on a six-month tenure only.

The Apple India Online Store went live in September 2020. It offers customers a full range of products and support with the same premium experience found in Apple store locations around the world. — IANS

Plea in SC Seeking Direction to WhatsApp To Roll Back Its New Privacy Policy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court, seeking a direction to instant messaging platform WhatsApp to roll back its recently-launched new privacy policy on the ground that it is violative of laws and can impact the country's security.

The plea filed by the Confederation of All India Traders has also sought a direction to the Centre to intervene in the matter and frame guidelines to govern large technology-based companies such as WhatsApp Inc., Facebook Inc. and Facebook India Online Services Private Limited.

The petition filed through advocate Vivek Narayan Sharma says the PIL was necessitated due to the failure of the Centre in carrying out its constitutional duty and responsibility to protect the rights to privacy and freedom of speech and expression of the

citizens of India.

"The respondent no.1 -- Union of India -- has granted permission to respondent nos 2 to 4 to run the WhatsApp application in India, but has failed to play the role of a guardian to protect the fundamental rights of citizens in as much as WhatsApp, which is rendering essential public services by enabling citizens to communicate, has recently imposed unconstitutional privacy conditions which are not only violative of the law but can impact the national security of the country," it says.

The plea says the Centre has failed to impose necessary and restrictive conditions in the instant case, while the European Union's (EU) Antitrust Authority imposed serious restrictions on the proposed policy of WhatsApp and a fine of 110 million euros on the instant messaging platform in 2017.

"...on January 4, 2021, WhatsApp introduced its new privacy policy

through which it scrapped its 'opt-out policy' and from now on, users will have to compulsorily consent to share their data with Facebook and its group companies for using the platform. The new policy will come into effect from February 8, 2021," it says.

The petitioner said the updated privacy policy of WhatsApp would adversely impact the citizens' fundamental right to privacy and is also fundamentally opposed to their representation.

"Today, high government officials like ministers and members of Parliament, judges, senior bureaucrats, defence personnel, crores of traders and well-known businessmen and so on use WhatsApp for sharing confidential and personal information and the compromise in the privacy policy would result in serious repercussions even for the national security of India," the plea says.

It says that aggrieved by the impugned policy of WhatsApp

and its impact thereof, the petitioner had written to the Centre, asking it to intervene in the matter and vide its powers provided under the applicable law, direct WhatsApp to roll back its policy or alternatively, ask the firm to cease its operations in India.

The plea says users share confidential information on the platform on the assurance that their private and personal conversations, along with their confidential data and information, will neither be accessed by any other person (including the service provider itself) nor would such data or information be shared or exploited or utilised by anyone in any manner whatsoever.

Thus, the technology giants who deal with such data must have a fiduciary duty to ensure that the information they so possess and collect from citizens and businesses must be safe and not used for their own commercial gains without the consent of the users.

CBI Suspends Its 2 Personnel For Taking Bribe, Recommends Action Against 2 Officers

NEW DELHI: The CBI has suspended its Inspector Kapil Dhankad and Stenographer Sameer Kumar Singh for allegedly receiving bribes to give away probe-related information and compromise on investigation into two cases of bank fraud totalling Rs 4,300 crore, days after it booked them and two officers.

Officials said on Saturday that the agency has recommended to the Department of Personnel and Training to initiate administrative action against the two officers -- deputy superintendents of police R K Rishi and R K Sangwan.

The CBI has accused Dhankad, a State Bank of India manager who joined the agency on deputation as Inspector, for allegedly receiving bribes of at least Rs 25 lakh to compromise on investigation into a number of cases and passing on crucial information to the accused DSPs who were understood to have been working on behalf of Shree Shyam Pulp and Board

Mills and Frost International. Shree Shyam Pulp and Board Mills is accused in a Rs 700-crore bank fraud case, while Frost International is accused in a Rs 3,600-crore bank fraud case.

"The CBI has a zero tolerance policy towards corruption, be it other departments or within the organisation. The case is a result of strict vigil and action on any input which indicates involvement of our officials in corrupt practice," an official said.

The agency has alleged that Dhankad posted in the banking, securities and fraud unit of the agency, in collusion with the DSPs, was receiving kickbacks to pass on crucial information and compromise on investigation, they said.

According to the charges levelled in the eight-page FIR, made public on Friday after the completion of a search operation by the agency, Inspector Dhankad received at least Rs 10 lakh each from Sangwan and Rishi, who were soliciting favours for Shree Shyam

Pulp and Board Mills and Frost International.

The embarrassing tale of corruption in the FIR says Sangwan, Rishi, Dhankad and Stenographer Singh, in conspiracy with advocates Arvind Kumar Gupta and Manohar Malik and certain other accused, "have been compromising the integrity of investigation of certain cases on extraneous pecuniary considerations".

The CBI after registering the case had carried out searches on Thursday in its headquarters where some accused officers are posted, its academy where Rishi is posted and 12 other locations across the country, officials said.

DSP Rishi received Rs 30 lakh in two equal instalments through two advocates having their office in Defence Colony here -- Manohar Malik and Arvind Gupta -- to extend favours to a Chandigarh-based company against which a corruption case was being investigated by the CBI, the FIR alleged.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Covid Vaccination...

in Kashmir for the vaccination of nearly 60,000 healthcare workers, 67,500 vaccines were received in the Jammu division.

In the first phase of the vaccination, healthcare workers across the union territory are being given the shots, while frontline workers will be covered in the second phase.

Jammu and Kashmir has over 1.23 lakh coronavirus cases, while death toll due to the pandemic is 1,920. The number of active cases is around 1,400. PTI

A Historic Day...

of Covishield vaccine from the Serum Institute of India, Pune. While 79,000 doses will be administered in the Kashmir division, 67,500 jabs will be given in the Jammu division.

Today is a decisive day in the fight against the pandemic. It is a day of pride for the country but we need to remain cautious against those who are out to spread rumours about the vaccine, Sinha said as he rolled out the vaccination drive from Government Medical College (GMC) hospital here.

He asked people not to pay any heed to the rumours with regard to the efficacy of the drug and asked his administration to start a publicity campaign to reach out to the people.

The Lt Governor saluted the COVID warriors and said their dedication and self-less service helped the people to overcome this challenge.

When pre and post pandemic history will be written, your contribution will be written in golden words, he said, adding, we are fully prepared to ensure a successful vaccination drive.

Sinha, however, asked people not to let down the guard for at least 45 days after getting vaccinated.

Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam, in his address, expressed hope that the country will be free of pandemic within the next three to four months.

As far as J-K is concerned, we have put in place an impressive strategy to deal with the virus and are ready for the vaccination drive. In fact, we have developed the capability of conducting five lakh vaccines per day, he said as he praised the frontier warriors for their contribution in the fight against the infection.

Earlier, Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education, Atal Dulloo said the vaccination is being done in phases with the first phase covering healthcare workers numbering 1.6 lakh.

In the second phase, he said, seven lakh frontline workers including security forces, paramilitary forces, police, municipality workers and revenue department officials who were involved in surveillance and contact tracing will be covered, while 50 plus population of those less than 50 years but suffering from comorbidities will be covered in the third phase.

We are following the election booth management strategy where vaccination site wise management is being planned meticulously. The beneficiary will get SMS about the session, date and time with regard to both the doses and will be handed over a certificate, he said.

Dulloo said the drive was simultaneously started at 40 locations across the J-K and the number of centres would be gradually increased.

Each vaccination site and in each session, 100 people will be vaccinated. We are ready with 1,053 vaccination sites which will be made operational when needed, he said.

our cold chain equipment is available at all places, we have conducted dry run and also completed the necessary training well in advance to be part of the biggest vaccination drive in the world.

Referring to the effort of the government to tackle the pandemic, he said almost every third person in the Union Territory has been tested since the outbreak of the novel disease.

We are conducting 25,000 to 30,000 tests on a daily basis while RTPCR tests have also been started in remote medical colleges like GMC Doda. We have a total of 1.22 lakh positive cases, of which 97 percent have recovered while the active positive cases dropped to 1,500 at present, he said.

He said over 1,900 COVID-related deaths have occurred in J-K, a mortality rate of 1.5 percent which is almost equal to the national average.

1 Covid-19...

Poonch (24), Ramban (21), Kishtwar(22), and Reasi (15).

Meanwhile, 109 new cases of Covid-19 were detected across J&K on Saturday, taking the total number of people infected by the virus in UT to 123217, officials said. Among the new cases,

officials said, 55 were reported from Jammu division and 54 others from Kashmir Valley.

Giving district-wise details, they said, Srinagar reported 20 cases, Baramulla 8, Budgam 5, Pulwama 7, Kupwara 5, Anantnag 1, Ganderbal 5, Kulgam 1, Shopiana 2, Jammu 47, Udhampur 1, Kathua 2, Samba 3, Poonch 1 and Ramban 1.

Moreover, they said, 256 more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals-- 168 from Jammu Division and 88 from Kashmir Valley. (With GNS inputs)

Mercury Dips...

reducing visibility.

The cold wave conditions intensified as the mercury dropped further during the night and the minimum temperature settled several degrees below the freezing point, a meteorological department official said.

Srinagar city -- the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir -- recorded a low of minus 8.2 degrees Celsius, down from minus 7.6 degrees Celsius the previous night, he said.

The minimum temperature in the city Friday night was over six degrees below the normal for this time of the year, he added.

The city had recorded a low of minus 8.4 degrees Celsius on Thursday, which was the coldest night in Srinagar since 1991.

Pahalgam tourist resort in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 9.4 degrees Celsius -- down from the previous night's minus 8.6 degrees Celsius.

The minimum temperature in Gulmarg tourist resort settled at minus 5.4 degrees Celsius -- slightly up from minus 5.5 degrees Celsius the night earlier.

Qazigund -- the gateway town to the valley recorded a low of minus 10.0 degrees Celsius and was the coldest recorded place in Jammu and Kashmir, the official said.

Kupwara, in north Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 6.8 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in the south, minus 8.7 degrees Celsius.

The surface of the Dal Lake has frozen due to the bone-chilling cold, prompting authorities to issue an advisory against walking on the ice.

The SDRF and the river police are conducting patrols around the frozen water-body to ensure the safety of the people.

Several other water bodies have also frozen due to the intense cold.

While the weather remained dry across Kashmir, a dense fog engulfed many parts of the valley including the city in the morning, which, however, dissipated later, the official said.

The plunge in the minimum temperature has also resulted in the freezing of water supply pipes.

A thick layer of ice has frozen over several roads in the city and elsewhere in the valley, making it difficult for motorists to drive.

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 Dal Lake here as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the valley.

The chances of snowfall are the 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-Khur'd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).

Bailey Bridge Makes...

after giving some final touches and verification," Chief Engineer, BRO, Brigadier I K Jaggi said.

Officials said the 120-foot-long bridge can carry 40 tons of weight and the BRO deployed men and machinery that worked day and night despite the severe cold for the completion of its construction.

The traffic between the two capital cities of Jammu and Kashmir was suspended on January 10 as a portion of the road caved in near Kela Morh in Ramban, hours after the 270-km highway was opened. The road was closed for over a week owing to heavy snowfall and multiple landslides.

Brigadier Jaggi, who monitored the construction of the bridge, said that the 40 ton Bailey bridge was raised within 60 hours, well ahead of 72 hour deadline set by NHAI. He said the material for bridge was brought from different parts of Kashmir and Kishtwar district in as many as 30 trucks.

The Jammu-Srinagar highway remained closed for more than a week as the bridge at

Kela Morh was blocked after one of its pass-ways was damaged due to a landslide.

Following the damage, the BRO started the restoration operation of the bridge by constructing the Bailey bridge.

Meanwhile, a traffic department spokesperson said only the stranded vehicles, including trucks carrying essential commodities to Kashmir, were allowed to ply after the reopening of the highway.

"Subject to fair weather and better road conditions, one-way traffic shall be allowed from Srinagar towards Jammu on Sunday. No vehicle shall be allowed in the opposite direction," he said.

The traffic on the highway plies alternatively from Srinagar and Jammu owing to the ongoing work of a four-laning project. (With PTI inputs)

Charges Filed...

He said the militant module was being operated on the directions of a Pakistan-based Lt handler Mohammad Amin alias Haroon, who was an active militant of the banned group operating in Doda belt and had exfiltrated to Pakistan in 2009.

The 11 accused were registered in a case last year at Peer Mitha police station in Jammu under various sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Arms Act.

The case was investigated by a Special Investigation Team headed by Deputy Superintendent of Police Parupkar Singh. During investigation, over Rs 1.90 lakh and a cache of arms and ammunition were recovered from the accused, the spokesperson said.

Those arrested in the case include brother of Pakistani handler Farooq Ahmad Bhat, Mubashir Farooq Batt, Toqeer Ahmad Batt, Mohammad Asif Batt, Khalid Latief Batt, Gazi Iqbal Batt, Tariq Hussain Mir, Farooq Ahmad Malik and Mohabbat Hussain (all residents of Doda) and Junaid Aziz Lone of Handwara area of Kupwara and Mohammad Hashim Malik of Baramulla.

Soz Condemns...

that after treatment in the hospital, he has again been kept under detention," he said.

This attitude of the UT Administration is extremely deplorable, he said, adding that the people want to know the reason why it has become necessary to keep Akhtar under detention even when he is not in good health.

CB Tightens Noose...

the report said.

The report further said that the investigation has revealed that a large number of tickets have been purchased by some agents through various airlines in violation of the standing norms and procedure.

"Accordingly searches, as mandated under law, were conducted today across the city and important documents pertaining to the case investigation have been seized from various travel agents," it added.

The action by Crime Branch comes at a time when airfares have skyrocketed making it difficult for people to take flights outside the Valley. "At the onset of every winter, hike in air fares particularly on Srinagar - Jammu & Delhi sectors has become a routine. These days also the same thing is happening but even worse is continuous closure of highway for so many days that has added to the woes of the general public," Meraj Khan, a resident of Hyderpora said.

"Online, there are no flights available, whereas, bulk tickets purchased in advance by certain travel agents on less price are being sold at exorbitant rates," he added.

Elaborating further, Mehraj said that a ticket for Srinagar to Delhi purchased by a travel agent before eight to nine months in advance for a meagre amount between Rs 2000 to Rs 3000 is now sold at Rs 9000 and above.

"It has become a business and there is nobody to check this illegal trade," he said.

Similar views were echoed by Sameer Ahmad Dar, a resident of old city's Nowhatta. "Government should constitute a team to monitor this business so that a check on all travel agents selling tickets is done. It shall be mandatory for every travel agent to submit the list of tickets sold by him along with the transaction details," Dar added.

An official wishing not to be named told Kashmir Observer that normally as per the practice in vogue, a travel agent shall earn not more than 20 - 30 percent of commission (travel agents commission) on the services he has provided to the customer.

"However, in this regard the tourism department has to fix rates for travel agents under the provisions of section 29 of Tourist trade act. Till date no fixation of rates has been done and this

is the reason travel agents are at liberty to sell tickets at exorbitant rates," he added.

Minor Rejig...

Baramulla, has been transferred and Deputy posted as Director, Tourism, Kashmir.

Nisar Ahmad Wani (KAS), Director, Tourism, Kashmir, holding additional charge of Managing Director, JKTDC, has been transferred and posted as Managing Director, JKTDC.

Mehmood Ahmad Shah (KAS), Director Industries and Commerce Kashmir has been transferred and posted as Director, Handloom and Handicrafts, Kashmir.

Mussarat-ul-Islam (KAS), Director, Handloom and Handicrafts, Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Ramban.

Rajesh Kumar Shavan (KAS), Managing Director, J&K Financial Corporation, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri.

Shamim Ahmad (KAS), Special Secretary to the Government, Finance Department, has been asked to hold the charge of Managing Director, J&K Financial Corporation, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

Imam Din (KAS), Director, Horticulture, Planning and Marketing, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara.

Ram Savak (KAS), Director, Horticulture, Jammu, has been asked to hold the charge of Director, Horticulture, Planning and Marketing, J&K, in addition to his own duties, till further orders.

Mohammad Nazir Sheikh (KAS), Deputy Commissioner, Rajouri, has been transferred and posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs. He has been also asked to hold the additional charge of Additional Secretary, Public Grievances.

"Kuldeep Krishan Sidha (KAS), Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag, has been transferred and posted as Additional Secretary to the Government, Revenue Department," reads the order issued by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Commissioner/Secretary to the government.

Rajnath Hails...

and markets will remain closed. However, the good thing was that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, efforts to deal with the crisis started with courage and understanding (of the issue)," he said.

He added that the biggest challenge at the time of the pandemic was testing.

"There were barely two laboratories, but today there are over 1,000 laboratories. There was a shortage of masks, ventilators and PPE kits. But the swiftness and understanding of the issue which India displayed, masks, PPE kits and ventilators are now being exported. This has been done in 4-6 months," Singh said.

Hailing the doctors and healthcare workers, he said, "Had our doctors, para-medical staff, whom we know as warriors, not taken the risk, we could not have fought the challenge. It is for this reason that doctors are considered as second God on earth. The threat of COVID-19 was on doctors, para-medical staff, sanitation workers. They stayed away from their families, ate food outside their homes, and then left for the hospital. These warriors have rendered charismatic performance. The doctors, para-medical staff, sanitation workers have worked as frontline soldiers and I salute their commitment and dedication."

He also informed that besides the two indigenous anti-COVID vaccines used in the nationwide vaccination drive that began on Saturday, four more vaccines are coming soon.

"These vaccines will not only be administered to people in India, but will also be exported to other countries. Because, India does not think about itself alone, but is also concerned about the entire world. Seers here gave the message of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam -- the whole world is a family. Since the Vedic era, the medical treatment system here has not only thought about human beings, but also of other creatures. During the reign of Ashoka, there were provisions for treatment of cows, buffaloes, cats and bats."

Singh said the construction of the New Command Hospital

building addresses a long standing need of the people and commended the authorities for re-locating rather than cutting trees while clearing land for it.

He assured the gathering that any obstacle to the project will be resolved in coordination with state and civil authorities. He said he was confident of the full cooperation of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in this regard.

He also remembered Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy Swachh Bharat which preached equal concern for all life and has been focused upon by the current government.

Highlighting the government's focus on health he said it has taken care to scale up medical infrastructure. He added that the government is also increasing government expenditure on health and has undertaken several measures.

Singh said Ayushman Bharat has fulfilled a great need for healthcare and mentioned that more than 1.5 crore people have been benefited by the scheme which is unparalleled across the world.

Ending his address, Singh congratulated the entire nation for the ongoing 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh' celebrations, which commemorate India's great victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak War.

He said the courage and valour of defence forces in the 1971 war a source of immense pride for the entire country.

Army chief General MM Naravane was also present at the programme.

The new building of Command Hospital is spread over 40 acre of land and will be built at an estimated cost of Rs 425 crore.

The building will have six blocks of four wings varying from three to nine storeys. All blocks are inter-connected with skyways independent of the main patient activity areas. The building complex will also have space for parking of 750 cars in addition to vertical circulation in the form of adequate numbers of elevators and ramps.

It will house state-of-the-art facilities with all specialties and sub-specialties notably cardiology with a modern Interventional Catheterisation Lab, Modular Operation Theatres with one hybrid Operation Theatre, State of the Art Nephrology and Dialysis Centre and Composite Oncology Centre.

The hospital was raised in 1859 and designated as Command Hospital (Central Command) in 1967. The building of the new Command Hospital was approved by the Chief of the Army Staff in 2018.

Proud Moment...

Atlanta, where she served as the director of engagement for community and economic development.

In December, another Kashmiri-origin woman, Aisha Shah, was named as partnerships manager at the White House Office of Digital Strategy.

In the Obama administration, Sameera Fazili served as a senior policy advisor on the White House's National Economic Council and as a senior advisor at the US Treasury Department in both Domestic Finance and International Affairs.

Prior to that, she was a clinical lecturer of law at Yale Law School. Originally from Buffalo in New York, she now lives in Georgia with her husband and three children. Sameera Fazili is a graduate of Yale Law School and Harvard College.

MHA Awards...

the police official said.

He said the award comprises a medal, certificate and cash reward of Rs 1 lakh.

The police was attended by other senior civil and police officers of the district who appreciated the role of police personnel for their bravery.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Migration Certificate issued by Islamic University Of Science And Technology ,Awantipora somewhere . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in Islamic University Of Science And Technology, Awantipora. within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Niyaz Ahmad Wani
S/o : Gull Mohd Wani
R/o: Wullar Hama, Saller, Anantnag.

100 Former Civil Servants Raise Questions Over Transparency In PM-CARES Fund



New Delhi: A group of 100 former civil servants wrote an open letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday raising questions over transparency in the PM-CARES Fund.

They said it is necessary that, for reasons of probity and adherence to standards of public accountability, the financial details of receipts and expenditures be made available in order to avoid doubts of wrongdoing. "We have been keenly following the ongoing debate about the Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations, or 'PM-CARES', -- a fund created for the benefit of people af-

ected by the COVID pandemic. Both the purpose for which it has been created as well as the way it has been administered have left a number of questions unanswered," they said in the letter.

"It is essential that the position and stature of the Prime Minister is kept intact by ensuring total transparency in all dealings the Prime Minister is associated with," they said.

The letter was signed by former IAS officers Anita Agnihotri, S P Ambrose, Sharad Behar, Sajjad Hassan, Harsh Mander, P Joy Oommen, Aruna Roy, former diplomats Madhu Bhaduri, K P Fabian, Deb Mukharji, Sujatha Singh and former IPS officers A S Dulat, P G J Nampoothiri and Julio Ribeiro among others.

In March last year, the Centre set up the Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM-CARES) Fund with the primary objective to deal with any kind of emergency situation like the one currently posed by the COVID-19 outbreak and provide relief to those affected. --- PTI

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE POSITION and stature of the Prime Minister is kept intact by ensuring total transparency in all dealings the Prime Minister is associated with,"

US Retains Terrorist Designation Of Pak-Based Group Behind Mumbai Attack



WASHINGTON: The United States has reviewed and maintained the terrorist designations of Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (LJ), along with ISIL Sinai Peninsula (ISIL-SP) and several other organisations.

Days ahead of the transition of power, the US Department of State said that it has amended the terrorist designations of LJ and ISIL Sinai Peninsula (ISIL-SP) to include additional aliases.

Additionally, the Department of State has reviewed and maintained the Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO) designations of LJ, ISIL-SP, LeT, Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al Naqshabandi, Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan (Ansaru), al-Nusrah Front, Continuity Irish Republican Army, and the National Liberation Army.

LeT, which carried out the 2008 Mumbai terror attack, was designated as a terrorist organisation by the United States in December 2001.

Since the original designation occurred, LeT has repeatedly changed its name and created front organisations in an effort to avoid sanctions, the State Department had said earlier.

The treasury department earlier this month said that the US blocked \$342,000 in funds of LeT in 2019 as part of its crackdown on foreign terror organisations. **PTI**

as to warrant revocation of the designations and that the national security of the United States does not warrant a revocation of the designations," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a federal register notification published on January 14.

These organisations included Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al Naqshabandi, Jama'atu Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis-Sudan, Harakat ulMujahidin, al-Nusrah Front, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Continuity Irish Republican Army, and the National Liberation Army.

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Since the original designation occurred, LeT has repeatedly changed its name and created front organisations in an effort to avoid sanctions, the State Department had said earlier.

The treasury department earlier this month said that the US blocked \$342,000 in funds of LeT in 2019 as part of its crackdown on foreign terror organisations. **PTI**



PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi virtually launches pan-India rollout of COVID-19 vaccination drive, in New Delhi, Saturday, Jan. 16, 2021. (PTI)

PM Modi Launches Covid Vaccine Drive

AIIMS Sanitation Worker First To Get Indigenous Covaxin Shot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched India's COVID-19 vaccination drive and asserted that the made-in-India vaccines being rolled out will ensure a "decisive victory" for the country over the coronavirus pandemic.

Addressing the nation ahead of the launch, Modi reminded people that two doses of vaccine are very important and asked them to maintain wearing masks and social distancing even after receiving the jabs.

"Dawai bhi, kadai bhi," he said. During his speech, Modi turned emotional as he spoke of the disruption the pandemic caused to people's lives, isolating victims of the coronavirus and denying the dead traditional last rites.

In a choked voice, the prime minister also referred to sacrifices made by healthcare and frontline workers, hundreds of whom lost their lives to the viral infection.

He also urged the country to

show patience during the vaccination drive as it had shown till now in fighting the pandemic.

Normally, it takes years to make a vaccine but in such a short span of time, not one, but two 'Made in India' vaccines are ready, Modi said, adding work on other vaccines is also progressing at a fast pace.

India getting two vaccines in such a short time is a testimony to the talent and skills of the nation's scientists', the prime minister said.

"Our vaccination programme is driven by humanitarian concerns, those exposed to maximum risk will get priority," he said.

Modi said that scientists and experts have given permission for emergency use of the made-in-India vaccines only after being absolutely sure of their safety and the people should be aware of any propaganda and rumours.

The made-in-India vaccines will ensure a "decisive victory" for the country over the coronavirus pandemic, he asserted.

Modi also asked people to

guard against complacency and follow the mantra 'Dawaai bhi, kadaai bhi' (referring to vaccines as well as strict compliance with COVID-appropriate behaviour).

The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) had earlier this month approved Oxford COVID-19 vaccine Covishield, manufactured by the Serum Institute, and indigenously developed Covaxin of Bharat Biotech for restricted emergency use in the country, paving the way for a massive inoculation drive.

This will be the world's largest vaccination programme covering the entire length and breadth of the country.

According to the government, the shots will be offered first to an estimated one crore healthcare workers, and around two crore frontline workers, and then to persons above 50 years of age, followed by persons younger than 50 years of age with associated comorbidities.

Cost of vaccination of healthcare and frontline workers will be borne by the central government.

'Sikhs For Justice' Probe: NIA Tightens The Noose; Summons Journalist, Farmer Leaders, Others For Questioning

Agencies

In a surprise move, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) has sent notices to over a dozen of people, including a journalist, farmer leaders associated with the agitation against three farm laws and others, in connection with its probe into the Sikh For Justice (SFJ) case, officials said on Saturday.

An NIA official related with the development wishing not to be named told IANS, "The NIA has sent notices to several people for examination."

The official said that they have been called as witnesses to ascertain certain details of the case.

When asked who had been called besides the journalist, the official said, "I cannot specifically say about the profession of the individuals who have been called for examination."

The official said that the agency had called a number of people as witnesses for investigation. "They have been called to be examined to ascertain certain details for the investigation," the official added.



The NIA has also summoned Baldev Singh, the president of Lok Bhalai Insaf Welfare Society (LBIWS), one of the unions participating in talks with the government over the new farm laws.

According to the NIA summons, Singh has been asked to appear before the anti-terror probe agency on January 17 at its headquarters located in south Delhi's CGO Complex. Besides Singh, Surender Singh Thikriwal, Palwinder Singh, Pardeep Singh, Norbeljit Singh and Karnail Singh have also been summoned to appear before the agency on January 17 and 18.

The NIA had registered a case on December 15 last year after a notification from the government under several sections of the IPC and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). In the FIR, which has been viewed by IANS, the NIA alleged that SFJ, an unlawful association and other Khalistani terrorist outfits including but not limited to Babbar Khalsa International, Khalistan Tiger Force and Khalistan Zindabad Force along with their front organisations have entered into a conspiracy to create an atmosphere of fear and lawlessness and to cause disaffection in people and to incite them towards rising in rebellion against the government.

The FIR also said that huge funds are being collected abroad for on-ground campaign and propaganda against missions in countries like US, UK, Canada Germany and so forth.

These campaigns are being spearheaded by designated terrorists Gurpatwant Singh Panmun, Paramjit Singh Pamma, Hardeep Singh Nijjar and others.

50-Plus Flights Delayed At Delhi Airport Due To Dense Fog



NEW DELHI: More than 50 flights were delayed on Saturday morning due to dense fog at the Delhi airport, officials said.

The thick blanket of fog reduced visibility to zero metre in the national capital on Saturday, the India Meteorological

Department (IMD) said. This hit aircraft traffic movement with more than 50 flights being delayed, airport officials said.

This is the third time this season - after December 8 and January 1 - that visibility dropped to zero metre in the city. **PTI**

Bharat Biotech To Pay Compensation If Covaxin Causes Side-Effects



HYDERABAD: Bharat Biotech, which has received a government purchase order for supply of 55 lakh doses of Covaxin, a COVID-19 vaccine, said the company would pay compensation to recipients in case of any serious adverse effects experienced after receiving the antidote.

In the consent form to be signed by the vaccine recipients, Bharat Biotech said: "In case of any adverse events or serious adverse events, you will be provided medically recognised standard of care in the government designated and authorised centres/hospitals."

"The compensation for serious adverse event will be paid by sponsor (BBIL) in case if the SAE is proven to be causally related to the vaccine," the consent form said.

In phase 1 and phase 2 clinical trials, Covaxin has demonstrated the ability to produce antibodies against COVID-19. However, the clinical efficacy of the vaccine was yet to be established and it was still being

studied in phase 3 clinical trials, the vaccine maker said.

"Hence it is important to appreciate that receiving the vaccine does not mean that other precautions related to COVID-19 need not be followed," the consent form said.

According to an industry expert, the company is liable to pay compensation to people in case of serious side effects as the vaccine is being administered while in the clinical trial mode.

The central licensing authority has granted permission for the sale or distribution of Covaxin for restricted use in emergency situations in public interest as an abundant caution, in clinical trial mode.

Meanwhile, Suchitra Ella, joint managing director, Bharat Biotech International Limited, on her Twitter account said: "Covaxin & Bharat Biotech is truly humbled & honoured to be of service to the nation & the fraternity of all first responders of covid who have served public health." --- PTI

THE COMPENSATION FOR SERIOUS adverse event will be paid by sponsor (BBIL) in case if the SAE is proven to be causally related to the vaccine," the consent form said.

NEWS MAKERS

New Covid Vaccine-Focussed Caller Tune Released, Voice Of Amitabh Bachchan Replaced

NEW DELHI: As India rolled out the world's largest inoculation drive against the coronavirus on Saturday, authorities have released a new vaccine-focussed caller tune and replaced the voice of actor Amitabh Bachchan with a woman's.

The new caller tune seeks to spread awareness about the COVID-19 vaccination drive and dispel rumours.

"Naya saal Covid-19 ki vaccine ke roop main nayi aasha ki kiran lekar aaya hai (The New Year has brought a new ray of hope in the form of vaccines against Covid-19)," the voice said. The caller tune said vaccines developed in India are safe and effective against the disease.

"Bharat main bani vaccine surakshit aur prabhavi hai. Covid ke viruddh humey pratirodhak shakta deti hai (Vaccines developed in



India are safe and effective. They will provide immunity against COVID-19)," it said.

The caller tune also urges people to trust the vaccine and not believe in rumours.

"Bhartiya vaccine par bharosa Karen. Apni baari aane par vac-

cine zarur lagwayein. Afawaan par bharosa na kare (Have trust in the vaccines made in India and do get vaccinated when it's your turn. Do not believe in rumours)," the new caller tune added.

The new caller tune talks about the vaccination drive, asking people to continue to follow COVID-19-appropriate behaviours such as wearing mask, maintaining social distance and washing hands, even after taking the vaccine.

The earlier caller tune, in the voice of Bachchan, began with a coughing sound, followed by a cautionary note on COVID-19-appropriate behaviours.

"Covid-19 se pura desh hi nahi pura wishwa ladd raha hai (Not just India, but the entire world is battling against Covid-19)," the voice said.

After this, Bachchan would further elaborate on the importance of Covid-appropriate behaviour like frequently washing hands, wearing mask and maintaining social distancing to avoid spread of the deadly virus.

Recently, a PIL was filed in the Delhi High Court seeking direction to the Centre to remove megastar Amitabh Bachchan's voice from the caller tune on precautions against the coronavirus on the grounds that he himself, along with some family members, had been infected with the virus.

Healthcare workers at the frontline of India's COVID-19 battle got their first jabs on Saturday with Prime Minister Narendra Modi launching the world's largest vaccination drive against the pandemic. **PTI**

Maharashtra Man Kills Girlfriend, Hides Her Body In Walls Of Flat; Arrested: Police

PALGHAR: A 30-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly killing his girlfriend and hiding her body in the walls of his flat in Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said on Saturday.

The accused killed the woman, 32, as she was pressuring him to marry her, an official release said.

The remains of the victim, who appears to have been killed in October last year, were recovered from the flat of the accused in Vangaon village, it said.

"The accused and the victim had been in a relationship for the last five years. She was last seen with the accused on October 21," it said.

When the family of the victim asked about her whereabouts, the accused used to tell them that she



had gone to Vapi in Gujarat. They finally approached the police, the release said. A case has been registered

against the man under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for murder and other charges. **PTI**

Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Tournament

Punjab Defeats J&K By 10 Wickets In A One-Sided Contest

Rayes Afzal

SRINAGAR: In the ongoing Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy 2021, Group A (Elite) toppers Punjab defeated J&K in a one-sided, low-scoring contest on Saturday at KSCA Cricket Ground (3), Alur, Bangalore.

Earlier in the day, Punjab captain Mandeep Singh won the toss and opted to bowl first. J&K batters struggled from the get-go and did not get off to a good start, losing wickets at regular intervals.

Eventually the J&K team managed an overall score of 139 for the loss of 8 wickets in the allotted 20 overs.

Shubham Pundir (42 of 34) and Qamran Iqbal (27 off 29) were the top scorers for J&K. While Siddharth Kaul (4-33) and Harpreet Brar (2-22) were the key-performers with the ball for Punjab.

Chasing a low total of 139, Punjab's opening pair did not allow J&K bowlers a whiff of a

chance and dominated the game right from the start, managing to seal the tie in the 15th over, without losing a wicket.

Abhishek Sharma (73 of 46) and Simran Singh (59 of 42) made sure Punjab got to their target easily.

By beating J&K, Punjab registered their fourth consecutive win of the tournament and cemented their place at the top of the Group A (Elite) standings.

For J&K the loss means they slip down to 3rd place, having won just two out of their opening four games.

Brief Scores:
J&K - Shubham Pundir 42 (34) (3x4, 2x6), Qamran Iqbal 27 (29) (2x4, 1x6)
S Kaul 4 overs, 33 runs, 4 wickets, Harpreet Brar 4 overs, 22 runs, 2 wickets
Punjab - Prabhsimran Singh 59 (42), (4x4, 4x6), Abhishek Sharma 73 (46), (4x4, 4x6).

AUS Vs IND, 4th Test, Day 2

India End Day On 62/2 After Rookie Bowlers Restrict Australia To 369

Press Trust of India

BRISBANE: Rohit Sharma's indiscreet shot selection pegged India back after rookie bowling attack restricted Australia to 369 on a rain-curtailed second day of the fourth Test on Saturday.

With heavy thunder-showers preventing any play in the post-tea session, India ended the day at 62 for two.

Rohit was elegant as ever in his 44 off 74 balls before Nathan Lyon in his 100th Test enticed him to come down the track but the half-chip-half-loft was safely pounced by Mitchell Starc in the deep.

India also lost Shubman Gill (7) who edged one off Pat Cummins to Steve Smith. Cheteshwar Pujara (8) and Ajinkya Rahane (2) added only two runs in the 6.1 overs before the break.

There were six boundaries from Rohit but he did not fiddle at deliveries in and around the off-stump channel even as Cummins and Josh Hazlewood bowled a testing spell under overcast conditions.

The shot of the session was an on-drive off Cummins which came after a streaky boundary through the slips in the same over. Another delightful stroke was an off-drive off Cameron Green as 49 runs were added for the second wicket.



There wasn't much swing on offer but the pace off the track has increased compared to the first day and it only helped that the Australian pace attack is a more well built one with average speed being at least 6-7 kmph more than their Indian counterparts.

Pujara, at the other end was playing his usual 'grinding out' game but it didn't look too arduous till Rohit kept the

scoreboard ticking at the other end.

It wouldn't be an over statement to say that among all top order batsman across both sides, Rohit looked the most comfortable and till his dismissal never looked like being troubled by the four-pronged attack. However as has been his wont in SENA countries, Rohit just before the tea break went after Lyon when

the situation demanded that he could have played for session-end.

It was very similar to his dismissal off Moeen Ali at the stroke of tea during the 2014 series and that was also after being set in the middle-order.

India, who have been forced to field a depleted side won't mind an inclement weather which effectively makes the home team more jittery as a draw would be enough for Ajinkya Rahane to lift the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

In the first session, India's rookie bowling line-up did put up a lion-hearted effort, getting the last five wickets for 95 runs.

Shardul Thakur (3/94) along with debutants Washington Sundar (3/89) and Thangarasu Natarajan (3/78) got the breakthroughs while Mohammed Siraj (28-10-77-1) got one on the opening day.

For an attack as thin on experience as India, the effort in adverse times can only be commended. India lost five main bowlers through the three Test matches and were forced to hand Test debuts to Natarajan and Washington.

Nathan Lyon (24 off 22 balls) and Mitchell Starc (20 off 35 balls) counter-attacked the inexperienced Indian attack with a brisk 39-run partnership to take Australia past 350-run mark.

Wayne Rooney Retires From Football To Take Derby Manager Job Permanently

Agencies

LONDON: After being the all-time record scorer for England and Manchester United, duly noted with a haul of 16 trophies, Wayne Rooney's illustrious playing career is over.

The former England and United captain has decided it's time to focus on trying to replicate his successes as a striker in management.

After taking temporary charge of Derby in November as a player-coach the 35-year-old Rooney has accepted the manager's job on a permanent basis with the second division club through 2023.

"It's a great feeling to go into management full-time," Rooney said on Friday.

"It's something that I've been preparing for, working for a few years now. Obviously had a taste of it over the last couple of months and I've enjoyed it."

Rooney has enjoyed three victories and four draws in his nine games at the helm of Derby, which remains in the relegation zone. It's been 13 years since Derby played in the Premier League a competition Rooney won five times after joining United from Everton at age 18 along with tasting glory in the Champions League, FA Cup, League Cup, Club World Cup and Community Shield.

"I've had a great career, I've enjoyed every minute," Rooney said.

"Some ups, some downs, I wouldn't change anything I've done in my career as a player."

It was often a tempestuous playing career, with the fiery Rooney embroiled in controversies in his private life and hot-headedness in games.

It is experience he will be able to draw on while nurturing future talents.

At United, Rooney worked under the greatest British manager of all-time in Alex Ferguson. With England, he witnessed more of the instabilities of coaching as a talented group of players never came close to winning a trophy.

"Hopefully I can now start to write some history and have a successful managerial career," Rooney said.

'Don't Regret Taking On Nathan Lyon,' Says Rohit Sharma After Criticism

Press Trust of India

BRISBANE: Rohit Sharma understands the criticism that his untimely dismissal has invited but the India vice-captain has "no regrets" about going after Nathan Lyon, saying that's his way of putting bowlers under pressure.

Rohit looked in good touch during his 44 off 74 balls but was dismissed trying to loft Lyon over mid-wicket, the kind of shots that has often brought about his dismissal even during earlier Test matches.

"You always have a plan and I actually have no regret of playing that shot. It is something that I always like to do --- put pressure on bowlers. Nathan Lyon is a smart bowler and he bowled into me which made it difficult for me to get some elevation," Rohit said at the post-match virtual conference.

His shot selection invited criticism from the commentary box. India were 62 for two at stumps when Rohit could have gone for a big score after a good start.

Rohit understands the disappointment but in his defence he explained why he went for that kind of a high-risk stroke.

"It's not that it is (that shot) coming out of nowhere. It's a shot that I have played well in the past. That's something that I back myself to play and that's the kind of role I play in this team. When it looks like that, it looks bad, but I don't think too much as my focus is to make it count once I am in," he said.

As he has always maintained, he doesn't have much time for his critics and would rather focus on the role his team wants him to perform.

"The team has shown lot of confidence in me. It's just that I have to do what the team expects me to do and not worry



about what happens anywhere else or what people talk about."

Rohit has had starts in all three innings -- 27 and 52 in Sydney apart from his 44 over here.

He explained about the technical adjustments that he made in Sydney and now in Brisbane as he has tackled the Australian pacers well.

"In Sydney, there wasn't much bounce, so I was staying on leg stump of the ball and here I knew the line and lengths particularly of the two right handers (Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood), they try and test you outside the off-stump all the time.

"So, here, I came a little bit on the off-stump to make sure that I cover the line and don't push my hands outside the off-stump. That's the little adjustment that I did," he explained.

During his two weeks of hard quarantine, he watched the Australian pacers at work in Adelaide and Melbourne and made a mental note of how he would

approach their first spells.

"What has really worked in the first half of my batting is getting closer to the ball and try and leave anything outside the off-stump. And then once I am in, try and play a few shots as well because that's what you want to do, score runs and see how they react when you score runs," he said.

On the match situation, Rohit said that although 369 at the Gabba was a very good first innings score and there is no reason why India with two of their most seasoned campaigners at the crease can't match the home team's total on a good batting track.

"We have got solid batters to come in now. Two of the most experienced players are still out there in the middle. The pitch is good and I don't see any reason why we can't get to that total of first innings."

Sharma's display was criticised by legendary Indian cricketer Sunil Gavaskar, who called the star batsman 'irresponsible' for throwing his wicket away.

Vice-Captain Rohit Sharma Heaps Praise On Debutant Bowler Natarajan

Press Trust of India

BRISBANE: India's vice-captain Rohit Sharma is extremely impressed with Thangarasu Natarajan's "solid character" and believes that the Tamil Nadu left-arm seamer is here to stay with his insatiable hunger to succeed at the top level.

Natarajan, who came in as a net bowler, joined fellow rookies Mohammed Siraj, Washington Sundar and Shardul Thakur to restrict Australia to 369, which according to Rohit is no mean feat.

"Natarajan bowled pretty well, to be honest. Playing outside the country (internationals) for the first time and bowling to such batsmen, it wasn't going to be easy and he was not under any pressure," Rohit said about the debutant, who was the pick of the bowlers with 3/78 in 24.2 overs.

"From ball one, he was right up there. He showed a lot of composure, is a strong character who doesn't speak much but we all know he has a solid personality. He wants to do well for the team and also for himself. He is here to stay," he said.

For Rohit, considering that cumulative experience of the bowling attack was four Test matches, they need to be lauded for keeping Australia under check on a good batting wicket.

"Most of these guys are playing first time in Australia. Siraj has played a couple of games and Saini played in Sydney.

Obviously, there's not a lot of experience there.

"They showed a lot of discipline and overall if I had to analyse the performance of these bowlers, I would say they bowled pretty well. It's a good pitch still. This is a great experience for them bowling against the best batters, and test themselves," he said.

Rohit believes that each and every youngster in this set-up knows that with so much competition for places, there aren't too many chances that will be up for grabs.

"Basically it boils down to where they are coming from. There is a lot of hunger to perform. You don't get a lot of opportunities at this level and we all know that. So when you get an opportunity, you have to make that count."

It's not every team that can restrict Australia to less than 400 hundred in six completed innings and that's a big credit to bowling unit.

"The A tours must have helped. Shardul, Navdeep and Siraj have played a lot of A-team cricket. They know how difficult it can be in Australia. Their understanding of conditions helped them."

"To not let Australia score 400 is an achievement in itself. These tours they have done has helped them stay in control," he said.

He also praised his Mumbai teammate Shardul and feels that more he plays, better he will become in terms of consistency.

'South Africa Playing In Pakistan After 13 Years An Advantage For Us,' Says Coach Misbah-ul-Haq

Press Trust of India

KARACHI: South Africa have always been a difficult opposition but Pakistan will have the home advantage this time as they host the visitors for the first time in nearly 14 years, said head coach Misbah-ul-Haq. Back from New Zealand after a disappointing tour which ended with a 0-2 loss in the two-Test series, Pakistan will now play two Tests against South Africa at Karachi (January 26-30) and Rawalpindi (February 4-8), followed by a three-match T20I series at Lahore, beginning from February 11.

"South Africa has never been an easy side to beat, but them playing after 13 years in Pakistan will be an advantage for us, and we have a great chance to improve our record against them," Misbah said.

He said the two Test matches are part of the ICC World Championship and are very important for the home side which will try to get maximum points out of it to improve their position on the table.

"Playing at home ground is always encouraging for the players, and it reflected in our performances in the series against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh last year," Misbah said.

Pakistan won Tests against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh in late 2019 and early 2020 at home but have lost successive away Test tours to Australia, England and New



Zealand leading to a criticism of the team's performances and selection policies with Misbah under-fire.

Following their dismal tour of New Zealand, Pakistan's new chief selector Muhammad Wasim named nine uncapped players in a revamped 20-member squad for the test series against South Africa.

"The series against South Africa is an important one, and I am sure the players selected in the squad have the potential and hunger to give best results in the series," Misbah said.

The South African cricket team, which last toured Pakistan in late 2007, arrived in Karachi on Saturday. The visiting team's head coach Mark Boucher cautioned his

team, saying his batsmen will face a tough task against a "dangerous" side like Pakistan.

"Pakistan is a dangerous side at home; we will have to come up with a proper strategy to beat them at their own backyard," the former wicket-keeper said.

"The wickets here in Pakistan are batting friendly, and we are relying on our batsmen to score runs. Their confidence will be high after scoring runs against Sri Lanka. Our fast bowlers will have to work very hard to get wickets."

South Africa had drawn the two-Test series in 2010 and 2013 when Pakistan had hosted them in the United Arab Emirates, following

a terrorists attacked on the Sri Lankan team bus at Lahore in 2009.

"Pakistan bowlers will have home advantage, so this series will be a test for our batsmen, but once they are successful in occupying the crease, they will be able to score freely," Boucher said.

"We are excited to play in Pakistan again, and expect a great series ahead with all focus on the game."

South Africa had won the two-Test series 1-0 during their last tour of Pakistan in 2007. The visitors have been boosted by the return of top fast bowler, Kagiso Rabada from injuries and he picked up 17 wickets in the last series between the two sides at 18.70.

SYED MUSHTAQ ALI TROPHY

Kerala's Mohammed Azharuddeen Enjoying His Moment Under The Limelight

Press Trust of India

KERELA: Kerala's Mohammed Azharuddeen wouldn't have set out on the arduous journey to emulate the Mohammed Azharuddin of Hyderabad, if not for a cricket-crazy elder brother and a die-hard fan of the former India captain.

From his name to his career option, everything to do with Azharuddeen was decided by Kamaruddeen. The journey continues, though.

While the first step towards fulfilling his family's dream was taken when he was chosen to represent Kerala in 2015, he shot into the national limelight recently with his 37-ball 100 in the domestic T20 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match against Mumbai.

"I have met him like twice or thrice. Once in my hometown and once in Hyderabad when we were there to play Ranji Trophy and he was the head coach of Hyderabad. I shared the story of how I was named after him with Mohd Azharuddin sir," Azharuddeen told PTI.

"To be frank, like my elder brother, I did not follow Azharuddin sir. I have just watched a few videos of his on Youtube," the Kerala stumper added.

The 26-year-old from Thalanga in north Kerala's

Kasaragod town, known for its love for cricket rather than football, said the blistering knock would have surely pleased his brother Kamaruddeen, who had changed his youngest brother's name from Ajmal to Azharuddeen after his birth.

Azharuddeen has seven brothers and all are big-time cricket fans.

"My family is a cricket family. I have seven elder brothers. Everyone has played cricket. Obviously they follow the game when I play. Even if they don't watch, they used to follow the scorecard," he added.

About his memorable knock against Mumbai, which was the third fastest T20 ton by an Indian batsman, Azharuddeen said he had not made any special preparation prior to that.

The player's game was affected after he was dropped down in the batting order by former coach Dav Whatmore.

"I am an opener. After Dav Whatmore came as coach he made me a middle-order player. I came down the order due to team requirements. It was not a good slot for me. I just requested the coach (Tinu Yohannan) to allow me to bat in the right slot, which is opening.

"I like to hit straight. One of my

strengths is hitting straight. I am good at hitting straight, against fast bowling and spin bowling. It was a true wicket (in the game against Mumbai) and I batted with confidence," he added.

Asked if he was looking forward to the IPL auction scheduled next month, Azharuddeen said he was not too worried about it.

"I am in a good zone. I am not worried about the IPL auction or something. I am just concentrating on our fourth match against Andhra," he said.

When asked about his goals, Azharuddeen mentioned playing in the IPL and scoring hundreds in Ranji Trophy.

"Not for this year actually. There are some goals, play IPL, score a few hundreds in Ranji trophy. I (made my) debut in 2015, I didn't get a chance to bat in top-order. Now I am clear about how to approach my batting, clear in my mind," Azharuddeen, a big fan of India captain Virat Kohli and M S Dhoni, said.

He also said he looked up to fellow Kerala cricketer Sanju Samson.

Coach Yohannan, a former India pacer, said making Azharuddeen open the batting gave him the freedom to express himself.