



**P3 CITY**

### PROTEST IN SRINAGAR AS PRICES OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES SOAR

Protests were held in the capital Srinagar City on Wednesday against the prolonging mutton crisis, curtailment in ration supplies, rising prices of fuel and other edible commodities in...

**P7 THINK**

### HOW CAN VITAMIN D SAVE US FROM COVID-19 ?

When we move from one place to another, during that time our body requires energy not only for the movement but also for respiration and other metabolic activities....



**P11 SPORTS**

### REAL KASHMIR FC CAPTAIN MASON ROBERTSON'S 4 MATCH BAN REVOKED

In a major relief to Real Kashmir FC, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) revoked the four-match suspension on its centre-back, Mason Robertson...



**Widom Quote!**  
A house divided cannot stand.  
—Abraham Lincoln

**NEWS DIGEST**

### 3 More Covid-19 Deaths In J&K

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported three more coronavirus deaths on Wednesday while 97 fresh cases of virus, including 20 travellers were detected across the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. All the victims, officials said, were residents of Kashmir Valley and their deaths have taken the fatality count to **More On P10**

### Army's Counter Infiltration Strategy Robust: Govt

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army has adopted a robust counter infiltration strategy focusing on a mix of technology and human resources to effectively check infiltration in border areas, the government said on Wednesday. The measures to check infiltration include boosting surveillance architecture and intelligence gathering. **More On P10**

### Dead Sheep Creates Bomb Scare

SRINAGAR: Panic gripped Subhanpora village of Qaimoh Kulgam here in south Kashmir when a blood stained bag was found by locals along the Srinagar-Jammu highway on Wednesday morning. Police rushed to spot and stopped vehicular movement on the highway. Sources told local news agency KNT that a bomb disposal squad (BDS) was also called **More On P10**

### 2 Held With Sharp-Edged Weapons

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested two persons along with "sharp-edged" weapons in Udhampur district. An official said that a police party of PS Udhampur laid a surprise naka near airforce road Udhampur for checking vehicles. "During the naka checking police party signalled to stop one car bearing registration **More On P10**

### Man's Body Found In Anantnag

ANANTNAG: An unidentified male dead body was recovered beneath snow in South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Wednesday, officials said. They said that some locals spotted the body near Kapren village of Verinag area of the district and immediately informed the police about it. Soon a police team reached the spot and recovered the "decomposed" body, the officials said. They said that a case has been registered and investigations set into motion. (GNS)

## US Helped India During LAC Stand-Off: Pentagon Commander

'Provided Some Info, Equipment To India In Its Border Crisis With China'

Press Trust Of India

WASHINGTON: The US provided some information, cold-weather clothing and some other equipment to India during its recent border crisis with China, which has adopted an increasingly assertive military posture to exert pressure and expand its influence across the region, a top Pentagon commander has told American lawmakers.

Admiral Phillips Davidson, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, also told the powerful Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday that China's recent activities along the Line of Actual Control have opened India's eyes to what cooperative effort with others might mean for their own defensive needs as he observed that



New Delhi, in the very near term, will deepen its engagement with the Quad.

"India has long had an approach called strategic autonomy, you know, a nonaligned approach with others, but I think certainly the activities along the Line of Actual Control with China has opened their eyes to what cooperative effort with others might mean for their own defensive needs," Admiral Davidson told lawmakers during the Congressional hearing. "We have provided some information to India **More On P10**

### Two Militants 'Trapped' In Bijbehara Encounter

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Two unidentified militants are believed to be trapped in an ongoing encounter with government forces in Bijbehara area of south Kashmir's Anantnag district, officials said Wednesday.

Acting on specific information about the presence of militants, special operations group (SOG) of police, army's 3 RR and CRPF laid a siege around Kandipora village of Bijbehara on Wednesday evening and launched a cordon and search operation, they said. As the search operation was in progress, the officials said that the militants hiding in the village opened fire upon the joint team.

The search team, the official said, returned the

### Training Camps Active In Pck: GOI

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Many militant training camps are active in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (Pck) and such facilities are used for training and subsequently, infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy also said the government has consistently emphasised to Pakistan to put an end to cross-border infiltration of militants and dismantle the infrastructure supporting militancy on a permanent basis.

"According to reports, there are several **More On P10**

## 2 Major IED Blasts Foiled, 7 Arrested: IGP



### Says Sticky Bombs Have Added New Dimension To Militancy In Kashmir

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Police on Wednesday claimed to have pre-empted two major improvised explosive device (IED) explosions in south Kashmir by arresting seven

people allegedly associated with Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashker-e-Taiba outfits.

Addressing a news conference at the police control room (PCR) here on Wednesday, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Vijay Kumar said that police have achieved a major success by busting two big modules of Lashkar and Jaish before they could carry out IED or suicide attacks in south Kashmir areas. "Awantipora **More On P10**

### LeT Commander in Srinagar, Police Sounds Alert

SRINAGAR: Police have sounded an alert over the presence of Lashker-e-Taiba commander Abbas and the possibility of a militant strike in this **More On P10**

### Stone Pelting Unacceptable, Says IGP

39 Booked Over Friday's Nowhatta Clashes

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police Kashmir Vijay Kumar Wednesday said stone pelting will not be tolerated at any cost stating that 39 youth who indulged in creating law and order issue in Srinagar have been arrested of which 15 will be slapped with PSA. **More On P10**

### US Defence Secretary To Visit India Next Week

WASHINGTON: US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin will visit India next week along with Japan and South Korea, the Pentagon announced on Wednesday, in the first overseas trip of a senior member of the new Biden Administration. This is the first time that India has been included in the itinerary of the first overseas trip of a US Defence Secretary. **More On P10**

### President Xi Tells Army To Be Ready

BEIJING: Chinese President Xi Jinping has told the country's military that it must be prepared to respond to a variety of "complex and difficult" situations at any time, and to resolutely safeguard national sovereignty. Xi, 67, who heads the ruling Communist Party and the military made the remarks at a panel discussion attended **More On P10**

## DDC Members Call Off Protest, To Meet LG On Friday

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The newly-elected District Development Council (DDC) members on Wednesday called off their two-day long protest in support of better status and monthly honorarium, saying they have got an assurance from Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha whom they are meeting on Friday.

However, the DDC members said they will decide their future course of action after the meeting with the Lt Governor, reiterating their demand for cancellation of the warrant of precedence and honorarium scale set up by the Union Territory administration.

Cutting across party lines, the newly-elected DDC members

had on Tuesday boycotted a two-day training programme here and staged a protest in support of their demand for better status and monthly honorarium, forcing the Lt Governor to cancel his inaugural session.

Various political parties including the BJP, the Congress, the CPI(M) and the Peoples' Conference came out in support of the agitating DDC members and urged Lt Governor Sinha to ensure they have adequate powers to mobilise government departments and address public grievances.

The maiden DDC elections to 280 seats — 14 each in 20 districts — were held in November-December last year and the chairpersons and their deputies in all **More On P10**

### Bukhari Seeks PM, Shah's Intervention

The Apni Party on Wednesday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah to resolve protocol power and honorarium issues of DDC members, alleging that the bureaucracy has always attempted to uproot the democratic edifice in Jammu and Kashmir. This comes on a day District Development Council (DDC) **More On P10**



## Gulmarg Receives More Snow As Mercury Dips In Kashmir

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The upper reaches of Kashmir Valley, including Gulmarg, received fresh snowfall while rains lashed

plains amid forecast for erratic weather till March 15.

A meteorological department official said that Gulmarg, the world famous skiing resort, received 2.5

centimetres fresh snowfall in last 24 hours till 0830 hours. In past 72 hours, the famed tourist destination in north Kashmir received 52.5cm of snow and **More On P10**

## Delhi High Court Stays ED Summons To Mehbooba



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Enforcement Directorate not to press for former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti's personal appearance in a money laundering case till the court hears her petition on March 18, her daughter said.

The matter came up for hearing before a division bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Anup Jairam Bhambhani. The matter was posted for March 18 with a direction to the ED not to press for her personal appearance on March 15. The PDP leader had challenged **More On P10**

## Kashmir's 'Holy' Heist Driven By Dope?

Zeenish Imroz

In the early fall of 2020, a half-naked man showed up in Srinagar's Dastgeer Sahab shrine to commit yet another dark deed.

Amid pandemic, sanctums of Kashmir faced a wave of thefts. Such acts of stealing were first noticed by the early risers—muezzins—before a group of gumshoes would arrive at the crime scene for inspection.

At Khanyar, the boyish burglar's midnight arrival looked like a classic case of burglary. His oily body reminded many of those hoary robbers of yore who would loot shelters and shops, and give slip to their captors with their greasy skin.

The bolstered thug, it seemed, was only following his tribe's textbook rule.

With the dawn of 13 September



2020, the security guard of the shrine woke up for a routine inspection round. Leaving his wooden chamber through the entrance, he walked into the narrow corridor to the sanctum

of Ghouse-ul-Azam Dastgeer, Sheikh Abdul Qadirjeelani [RA], where he was shocked to witness the security breach.

The donation box lied broken, empty of all the cash and gold.



The appalled guard immediately called Khalid Geelani, one of the members of the Intizamiya Committee of the shrine, to inform him about the robbery. Khalid, still asleep, woke up with a jerk.

Shocked to hear about the theft, he decided to visit the shrine where he witnessed the chaotic scene of crime.

Khalid waited for other members to arrive for the pre-dawn prayer. On

viewing the mind-numbing situation, the shrine custodians were in a dilemma — whether to offer prayers or not. After Khalid persuaded them to pray as there was no logic in visiting the police station so early, the prayer was held with disarrayed minds.

Inside the sanctum, Khalid along with some members of the Intizamiya Committee waited for the police station to become operational for filing the First Information Report (FIR).

Given the centrality of the shrine, the matter looked sensitive. But unlike last time, 2012, when the sanctum rose up in flames, cops faced no flaring tempers in "Naya Kashmir". Heightened fortified foothold had created its own hush when the investigation team led by SDPO Farhan Jehanzaib, Inspector Parvaiz Ahmad Wani, ASI and head **More On P10**

# In Inclusivity Push, Unilever To Exclude Word 'Normal' From Beauty Products

## Agencies

**D**ove soap maker Unilever will remove the word "normal" from its beauty and personal care products, as well as stop digital alterations of body shapes and skin colour of models used in its advertising in a push to be more inclusive.

The move from the London-based company, which is one of the top advertisers in the world, comes as it tries to move beyond the backlash it has faced for some of its advertising campaigns.

Unilever was pushed to rename its top selling skin-lightening brand in India to "Glow & Lovely" from "Fair & Lovely" last year after facing consumer ire over negatively stereotyping darker skin tones.

In 2017, the company faced a



social media outcry over an advert for Dove body wash, which showed a black woman removing her top to reveal a white woman.

More recently, an ad forced Unilever to pull all its TRESemme haircare products from South African retail stores for 10 days due

to a backlash.

"We know that removing 'normal' alone will not fix the problem, but we believe it is an important step towards a more inclusive definition of beauty," Sunny Jain, president of Unilever's beauty and personal care

division told Reuters.

Globally, more than a hundred Unilever brands will have the word "normal" removed to describe skin type or hair texture, and replaced with terms such as "grey hair" for shampoos or "moisture replenish" for skin creams by March next year.

Unilever said a poll it conducted of about 10,000 people globally showed that more than half the respondents felt using "normal" to describe hair or skin made people feel excluded, while 70% said using the word in advertising had a negative impact.

The company also said it would stop digitally altering body shape, size, proportion and skin tones of models it uses in its own advertisements, or those of its paid influencers across all its brands, a move that started with the Dove brand in 2018.

## ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.

ADVERTISMENT NOTICE No: 01 of 2021

Dated: 10-03-2021

Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Kashmir invites online applications from the eligible candidates for the post of Professor on contractual basis/ Guest Professor for Academic Session 2021 in various Disciplines/Departments/Centres viz, Journalism & Mass Communications, English Language & Literature, Islamic Studies, Arabic Language & Literature, Economics, Physics, Chemistry, Statistics, Electronics, Averose Centre of Philosophical Studies, Centre for International Relations, Haba Khatoon Center for Kashmiri Language & Literature, Management Studies, Civil Engineering, Computer Science & Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Architecture, Watson-Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine and Mantaqi Centre for Science and Society.

### General Conditions:

- The contractual engagement as Professor/ Guest Professor including remuneration and maximum age limit shall be governed strictly as per the UGC norms.
- Candidates are required to apply online through University website [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in) no other means/ mode of application will be accepted.
- Hard copy of application form complete in all respects duly supported by attested copies of certificates and testimonials should reach office of the Registrar by or before 30-03-2021.
- The detailed advertisement notice and procedure/instructions for filling of online application shall be available on university website [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in).

### Important dates:

- Availability of online application form: 12-03-2021
- Last date for submission of Online Application form: 26-03-2021
- Last date for submission of hard copy of application form: 30-03-2021

No. IUST/Reg/Adv/21/E/105

Dated: 10-03-2021

Sd/-  
Registrar

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Driving licence bearing DL No; 11222 somewhere. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the RTO Kupwara within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohammad Mustafa Mala  
S/o Khazir Mohammad Mala  
R/o Pohrupeth Langate  
ams

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Discharge Certificate of class 10th under Admn No; 1714 Dtd: 06-12-2010, serial No: 447 dATED 28-08-2012 issued by Govt BOys High School Batapora. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Principal Govt BOys High School Batapora within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Wani Basharat Ahamd  
S/o Nazir Ahamd Wani  
R/O Mazhama  
BMG

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 9th Certificate issued by Govt Higher Secondary School Narapora Shopian. Now I am applying for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Principal Govt Higher Secondary School Narapora Shopian within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Nazir Ahamd Wani  
S/O Ab Razaq Wani  
R/o Balapora Shopian  
ast

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

## Office of the Chief Education Officer, Srinagar

Abu Bakar Colony Bemina Email: [ceo\\_srinagar@yahoo.com](mailto:ceo_srinagar@yahoo.com)

### TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are invited from reputed restaurants / tea stalls / hotels which should reach this office during office hours within seven days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper for supply of refreshment/tea/lunch to be served among participants attending different training programmes conducted by this office at various centres for one year wef March 2021 at different venues and dates as will be indicated in the training schedules published by this office. The rates offered should be purely for Chief Education Office Srinagar strictly as per the specifications indicated against each. Undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.

- Tea with Biscuit Per cup.
- Tea Lipton with samosa per cup.
- Tea Lipton with Cake per cup
- Tea Lipton with Chicken / Mutton Patty per cup
- Cooked rice with one Chicken Piece and Chutni (Plate)
- Cooked rice with one Chicken Piece, Dal, Sabzee and Chutni (Plate)
- Cooked rice with one Dal, Sabzee, Paneer and Chutni (Plate)
- Cooked rice with one mutton piece and Chutni (Plate).
- Cooked rice with one Mutton Piece, Dal, Sabzee and Chutni (Plate)
- Cooked Rice with Dal and Sabzee.
- Chicken Birayani Single Piece/ Double Piece and Chutni (Plate)
- Vegetable Birayani and Chutni (Plate)
- Mineral Water 1000ml/500ml/250ml
- Juice 250 ml / 500 ml

No.: CEO/Sgr./SmS/  
Dated:

Chief Education Office  
Srinagar

DIPK-14800/20

## Jammu & Kashmir Small Scale Industries Development Corporation Limited (SICOP)

(A J&K Government Undertaking)  
2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Sanat Ghar building Bemina Srinagar  
Email: [aimavijay@gmail.com](mailto:aimavijay@gmail.com)

### E-TENDER NOTICE No:29 of 2020-21 Dated:09-03-2021

For and on behalf of the Managing Director of Jammu & Kashmir Small Scale Industries Cooperation Limited, online tenders are invited from reputed contractors who are registered with CPWD/MES/PWD of appropriate class in India.

Name of work	Adv. Cost. In lacs	Earnest money	Class of contract	Cost of tender document	Time of completion	Position of AA
Providing and fixing of G.I chainlink fencing at Industrial Estate Gorihaakar Handwara Kupwara	67.47 lacs	1.3494 lacs	"A" Class civil	2500.00	60 working days.	Accorded

### Terms and Conditions:

- The tender documents for the above job can be seen on the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) from 09-03-2021 (1200Hrs)
- The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website from 09-03-2021 (1200Hrs) onwards.
- The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) from 09-03-2021 (1200Hrs) upto 29-03-2021 (1630Hrs) only.
- The uploaded Pre-Qualification bids in the first instance on the website will be opened on 30-03-2021 (1200Hrs). In case of holiday on the date of opening of bid, bids will be opened on the next working day. The financial bids of only those firms shall be opened who qualify in pre-qualification bid, intimation in respect of opening of financial bids shall be notified separately.
- Cost of tender document shall be deposited in Account No CC-0148020100001980, JFSC Code JAKAOKARRAN, J&K Bank Branch Karan Nagar Gole Market Srinagar and receipt be uploaded online. Earnest Money Deposit (in shape of CDR/FDR) in original, favouring General Manager, SICOP Kashmir shall be uploaded online.
- The Managing Director J&K SICOP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.
- All documents as required in SBD should be uploaded with the pre-qualification bid

Sd/-

General Manager Projects  
SICOP Kashmir

DIPK-NB-6287/20

Jammu And Kashmir Union Territory

## Office of the Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Shopian.

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

### SHORT TERM E-NITS.NO.:- (47) OF 2020-21 (E-TENDERING)

For And On Behalf Of Lt. Governor Union Territory Of J&K, E-Tenders Are Invited On Item Rate Basis From Approved And Eligible Contractors Registered With J&K State Govt. CPWD/ Railways/ Other Governments/ Union Territory For The Following Works:-

S. No.	Name of work	Adv. Cost (In lacs)	Cost of Tender Doc.	Earnest Money	Time of completion	Class of Contract	Head of Account
	Restoration of KhasiporaLadi branch of Tongri canal at village Khasipora (Breached spot)	2.66	250/-	7980/-	07 days	DEE	Untied Grants
	Construction of lining wall (at spots) on KasiporaLadi, branch of Tongri canal at village Khasipora	1.29	200/-	3870/-	07 days	DEE	Untied Grants

POSITION OF FUNDS: AVAILABLE  
WHETHER ACCORD OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL OBTAINED = YES

1. THE BIDDING DOCUMENT CONSISTING OF QUALIFYING INFORMATION, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, SPECIFICATIONS, DRAWINGS, SET OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND OTHER DETAILS CAN BE SEEN/ DOWNLOADED FROM THE DEPARTMENTAL WEBSITE [WWW.JKTENDERS.GOV.IN](http://WWW.JKTENDERS.GOV.IN) AS PER SCHEDULE OF DATES GIVEN BELOW:

Sl No.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	09-03-2021 (05:00 PM)
01	Date of start of downloading.	09-03-2021 (05:00 PM)
03	Bid submission start date Technical/ Financial.	10-03-2021 (10:00 AM)
04	Bid submission end date.	16-03-2021 (4:00 PM)
05	Date & Time of opening of Bids (online).	16-03-2021 (05:00 PM)

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- BIDS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED WITH PROOF OF COST OF TENDER DOCUMENT IN SHAPE OF TREASURY RECEIPT CHALLANAND EARNEST MONEY/ BID SECURITY IN SHAPE OF CDR FROM ANY SCHEDULED OR NATIONALIZED BANK PLEDGED TO EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION DIVISION SHOPIAN (TENDER RECEIVING AUTHORITY).
  - The date and time of opening of Technical Bids shall be notified on departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial Bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of the Executive Engineer Irrigation Division Shopian (Tender Receiving Authority).
  - The bid for the work shall remain valid for period of 90 days from the date of opening of bid.
  - The earnest money shall be forfeited if:-
  - Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modification in terms and conditions of the bid.
  - Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 7 Days after fixation of contract.
  - Extension of time shall be also admissible in the event of temporary suspension of work.
- All other terms & conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form 25 (Double Agreement Form).

No:5226-47  
Date: 09-03-2021

DIPK-14815/20

Executive Engineer,  
Irrigation Division Shopian.

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

Tel/Fax: 0194-2433590 - 2437647 (srinagar) : 0191-2479371, 2470102 (jammu) website: <http://www.jakbopee.org>, email: [ceoiakbopee@gmail.com](mailto:ceoiakbopee@gmail.com)

Subject:- Addendum to Notification No:-034-BOPEE of 2021, dated:- 08-03-2021.  
The words "Reserved Category" shall and shall be deemed to have been included/added in column Number three under heading "Remarks" of Notification No:- 034-BOPEE of 2021, dated:- 08-03-2021 for all the mentioned days (15-03-2021 to 18-03-2021).

### Note :-

- All Open Merit and Reserved Category candidates who have been called for physical counselling from 15-03-2021 to 18-03-2021 are advised to report alongwith their Admit Card(s) at the time of counselling positively.
- The other terms and conditions shall remain the same as mentioned in the e-Information Brocher/Notifications/Notices issued from time to time by the Board.

E&OE.

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

No: BOPEE/Exam-35(iii)/2020  
Dated:09.03.2021.

DIPK-NB-6301/20

## SRINAGAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Bemina, Bye Pass near sKIMS Medical college, srinagar, Kashmir-190018  
TEL: 0194-2493191, FAX: 0194-2493180, EMAIL: [srinagairdevelopmentauthority@gmail.com](mailto:srinagairdevelopmentauthority@gmail.com)

Srinagar Development Authority intends to empanel Consultancy firms for Planning and design of various urban infrastructure development projects. Expressions of Interest (EOI) are invited from consultancy firms, having requisite resources and experience in the field of Urban Infrastructure development, for taking up comprehensive Urban Infrastructure Planning including preparation of plans, layouts, Architectural & Structural Design, services, estimating & costing etc. Consultancy firms desirous of applying for empanelment shall have experience of at least five years in similar nature of works in the Central/State/U.T/ Government, semi-Government, PSU, Large Private Sector Companies.

Detailed Expression of Interest (E.O.I) can be downloaded from the website of Srinagar Development Authority, [www.sdasrinagar.com](http://www.sdasrinagar.com). The duly filled in and signed document, addressed to Vice Chairman SDA, accompanied by registration fee of Rs 1000/- only in the shape of Demand Draft in favour of Vice Chairman, SDA/ online Payment in SDA Account No.1206010200000025 (JK Bank JVMC Bemina Srinagar) should reach the office of the Vice Chairman SDA by or before 27th of March 2021 (3.00 PM).

No: SDA/STP/ 4267-73  
Dated: 09/03/2021

Vice Chairman  
Srinagar Development Authority

DIPK-NB-6269/20

**Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid Cancels Aali Masjid Congregation**

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid Srinagar Wednesday said that due to continued house detention of the Chairman of Hurriyat Conference Umar Farooq, the decades old tradition of Majlis Waazo-Tableegh at historic Aali Masjid on the occasion of Meraj-un-Nabi (SAW) will not be able to take place tomorrow. So the congregation stands cancelled.

Anjuman termed it extremely unfortunate and regrettable that as the house arrest of Mirwaiz continues, religious

congregations and majalis are not able to take place which causes great pain and anguish to the Muslims of Kashmir and is a violation of their rights.

Anjuman added that the restrictions on its chairman have been further tightened, since last Friday.

Anjuman asked the authorities that in view of the strong public demand, Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir should be released and allowed to lead the coming Friday prayers so that he fulfill his responsibilities of Qaal Allah Wa Qaalaa Rasool (SAW).

**Seminar On 'Women In Leadership' Held At CUK**

Observer News Service

Ganderbal: Department of Students Welfare (DSW) in collaboration with the Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) of the Central University of Kashmir (CUK) Wednesday organised a seminar "Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future In A Covid-19 World," at the Green Campus here.

The seminar was held to commemorate the 'International Day for Women' and students from different departments participated in the event.

Inaugurating the seminar, Registrar, Prof. M Afzal Zargar said the women have taken leadership roles in every profession and are managing their roles and duties to the best of their abilities. "During the lockdown due to Covid-19 pandemic, it were the women who shouldered full responsibility at the homes," he said, adding the women healthcare staff members in the health care institutions, across the country

did a commendable job in treating and managing the infected patients. He said several female health care workers, including nurses, lost their lives while performing their duties, round the clock.

Addressing the gathering, Controller of Examinations and Chairperson WEC, Prof. Parveen Pandit, said that acquiring of knowledge, and skills are the tools for empowerment of women during the contemporary times. She said the women should avail opportunities and overcome challenges in their respective professional fields in order to grow and carve a niche for themselves. She said the Day is being celebrated to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the women folk and address them accordingly.

Speaking on the occasion, DSW, Prof. Mehraj ud Din Shah, said, it is the Day to celebrate women's achievements, recognize challenges and focus on women's rights and gender equality.

**Two Drug Peddlers Arrested**

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Police during patrolling at Hafiz Bagh area of Srinagar arrested two drug peddlers and recovered contraband substance. A police spokesperson said that police intercepted a Scooty JK01AK 7854 and during search narcotic substances like Can-

nabies were recovered. He said that two persons identified as Umer Ahmad Dar, son of Manzoor Ahmad Dar, a resident of Umerhair Soura and Usman Najar, son of Fayaz Ahmad Najar, a resident of Usmanabad 90 Feet, Soura were arrested on the spot.

**Protest In Srinagar As Prices Of Essential Commodities Soar**

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Protests were held in the capital Srinagar City on Wednesday against the prolonged mutton crisis, curtailment in ration supplies, rising prices of fuel and other edible commodities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The protesters, an Apni Party statement said belonged to the Party and was led by Muhammad Ashraf Mir, the party's provincial president.

The protesters assembled outside the Department of Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs at Shaheed Gunj, Srinagar, and raised slogans against the administration for its failure in mitigat-

ing the sufferings of the people.

Apni Party in a statement said that the protesters raised slogans against curtailment in ration supply to the consumers who are being deprived of their quota for not having Aadhar registrations, continuous ration quota curtailments, unending mutton crisis, reduction in Kerosene Oil supplies, frequent electricity cuts, scarcity of drinking water supplies, rise in petrol and LPG prices, and hegemonic attitude of bureaucracy.

The statement said that the Provincial President of the party Mohammad Ashraf Mir addressed age protesters and said that the Party has decided to hit the streets

as the administrative inertia is eating into vitals of the people.

The statement said that the demonstration was aimed at awakening the authoritative bureaucratic regime from its deep slumber. "This regime is acting ostentatiously impervious to the woes of the people. The lingering mutton crises is a simple proof for the inefficiency and miserable failure of those in authority," Mir remarked.

He said that Apni Party would not shy away from its responsibilities and, if the need arises, will hit the streets again and again against this bureaucratic setup that has brought more misery in the lives of common people.

**Traffic Route Plan For Shab-e-Me'raj Notified**

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Traffic Police City on Wednesday notified a route plan and parking slots for the Shab-e-Me'raj celebrations at Hazratbal Mosque in Srinagar on March 12 and 19, as a huge rush of devotees is expected to throng the Mosque.

A communiqué informed that vehicles coming from North Kashmir carrying devotees after reaching Shalteng shall adopt the following route to reach Hazratbal, Shrine. Shaltang - Parimpora - Qamarwari - Cement Bridge - Noorbagh - Sekidafar - Eidgah - Alimajid - Sazgaripora - Hawal - Alamgari Bazar - Mill stop - Molvi stop (Lal Bazaar) - Botshah Mohallah - Kan-

itar - University parking at Sadrabal side.

Vehicles carrying devotees coming from South Kashmir after reaching Pantha Chowk shall adopt the following route to reach Hazratbal, Shrine. Panthachowk - Stone quarry (Athawajan) - Batwara - Sonwar Bazar - Ram Munshi Bagh - Gupkar - Grand Palace - Zetiyyar Ghat - Nishat - Foreshore road - Habbak crossing - University parking at Naseembagh, the communiqué said.

As for the vehicles carrying devotees coming from Budgam and adjoining areas, they have been asked to adopt the Hyderpora - Tengpora - Bemina bye pass - Bemina crossing route till Qamarwari from where they will travel as per the route plan framed for vehicles coming from north Kashmir.

Vehicles coming from Lal Chowk - SRTC crossing - Ikhwan Chowk - Khanyar Chowk - Bohri Kadal - Rajouri Kadal - Gojwari Chowk - Hawal - Alamgari Bazar - Mill stop - Molvi Stop (Lal Bazaar) - Botshah Mohallah - Kanitar - University Parking at Sadrabal.

Those coming from central Kashmir's Ganderbal have been asked to adopt the Nagbal - Zakoora - Habbak - University parking at Habbak. As for the return route plans, north Kashmir bound vehicles on return from Hazratbal Shrine shall adopt the following routes:

**Government of Jammu & Kashmir**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**R&B CONSTRUCTION DIVISION NO.II, SGR.**  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**

**NIT No. 181/CDII/17110-120 of 2020-21** **DATED: 05.03.2021**

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

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Repair/ Renovation of Bathrooms of Division/ Sub Division including other Civil works of Construction Division 2 <sup>nd</sup> Lal Mandi Srinagar.	3.28	200/-	15 Days	2059-M&R	"DEE"

**Position of AAA: Accorded** **Position of funds Available**

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

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	06.03.2021 from 10.00 AM
3	Bid submission Start Date	06.03.2021 from 10.00 AM
4	Bid Submission End Date	13.03.2021 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	13.03.2021 at 4:10 PM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2 <sup>nd</sup> , Srinagar

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

3. All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money as per the circular of Finance Department (Bid Security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below)

4. The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 02 Days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.

5. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

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

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

7.1. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

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

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

7.4. Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

7.5. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the technical bid.

Executive Engineer  
R&B Construction Division IInd  
Srinagar

**DIPK-14539/20**

**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
- BUBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

**HIGHWAY STATUS**

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

**HIJRI**  
**CALENDAR**  
26 Rajab  
1442

**PRAYERS**

FAJR	5: 28
ZUHR	12: 43
ASR	4: 53
Magrib	6: 37
ISHA	7: 57

**This Day In History**

- 502 - Ismail I crowned Shah of Persia (rules till 1524), founder of the Saffavid dynasty
- 1669 - Volcano Etna in Italy erupts killing 15,000
- 1795 - Battle at Kurda India: Mahratten beat Mogols.
- 1845 - The Flagstaff War: In New Zealand, Chiefs Hone Heke and Kawiti lead 700 M oris to chop down the British flagpole and drive settlers out of the British colonial settlement of Kororareka because of breaches of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi.
- 1848 - Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine and Robert Baldwin become the first Prime Ministers of the Province of Canada to be democratically elected under a system of responsible government.
- 1864 - The Great Sheffield Flood: the largest man-made disaster ever to befall England kills over 250 people in Sheffield.
- 1897 - A meteorite enters the earth's atmosphere and explodes over New Martinsville, West Virginia. The debris causes damage but no human injuries are reported.
- 1900 - British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury rejects peace overtures from the Boer leader Paul Kruger (on 5 March) as demanding too-favourable terms
- 1915 - The British declare a blockade of all German ports
- 1917 - British forces occupy Baghdad, the capital of Mesopotamia, after Turkish forces evacuated
- 1918 - Moscow becomes capital of revolutionary Russia
- 1920 - Syria proclaims Emir Faisal king after the country has fought off French domination
- 1931 - Ready for Labour and Defence of the USSR, abbreviated as GTO, is introduced in the Soviet Union.
- 1938 - Artur Seyss-Inquart replaces Kurt von Schuschnigg as Chancellor of Austria; German troops also entered the country
- 1941 - FDR signs Lend-Lease Bill (lend money to Britain)
- 1942 - Japanese troop land on North Sumatra
- 1945 - 1,000 allied bombers harass Essen, 4,662 ton bombs
- 1953 - 1st woman army doctor commissioned (FM Adams)
- 1958 - American B-47 accidentally drops nuclear bomb 15,000 ft on a family home in Mars Bluff, South Carolina; creates crater 75 ft across, bomb without its nuclear capsule
- 1960 - Pioneer 5 launched into solar orbit between Earth & Venus
- 1965 - Indonesia President Sukarno accepts qualifications of Suharto
- 1966 - Military coup led by Indonesian Gen Suharto breaks out
- 1970 - Iraq Ba'ath Party recognizes Kurd nation
- 1972 - OPEC threatens "appropriate sanctions" against companies that "fail to comply with ... any action taken by a Member Country in accordance with [OPEC] decisions."
- 1974 - Mount Etna in Sicily erupted
- 1982 - US boycotts Libyan crude oil
- 1985 - Mikhail Gorbachev replaces Konstantin Chernenko as Soviet leader
- 1986 - 1 million days since the foundation of Rome on April 21st, 753 BC
- 1986 - 187.27 million shares traded in NY Stock Exchange
- 1986 - Japanese probe Sakigake flies by Halley's Comet at 6.8 million km
- 1990 - Lithuania declares its Independence
- 1996 - The EU Database Directive is passed.
- 1999 - Infosys becomes the first Indian company listed on the NASDAQ stock exchange.
- 2003 - The International Criminal Court holds its inaugural session in The Hague.
- 2004 - Terrorists explode simultaneous bombs on Madrid's rail network ripping through a commuter train and rocking three stations, killing 190
- 2006 - Michelle Bachelet is inaugurated as the first female president of Chile.
- 2010 - Sebastián Piñera become chilean president.

*From KO Archives*

**Rousing welcome for Pak fans in India**

Sunil Kataria

Mohali - For several years, Afsha Sajjad wanted to visit India, the country she had heard of through anecdotes and seen through its popular film industry. Sajjad, a housewife from Lahore, finally got her wish on Monday when she crossed the border for Pakistan's first cricket series on Indian soil since 1999.

"It was my cherished dream; to come and see India and finally it has been fulfilled," she told Reuters.

"We were a bit nervous as we crossed the border but now I'm ecstatic," she said, adjusting the garland of marigolds she was given along with a rousing Indian welcome of drums and trumpets.

It has never been easy for ordinary Indians and Pakistanis to travel across the border as both nationalities face a series of bureaucratic restrictions if they want to visit the other country.

Normally visas are issued only to families separated by the 1947 partition of the subcontinent, and for religious, business and academic events. Sajjad is among thousands of Pakistani fans who have descended on Chandigarh, in India's northern Punjab state bordering Pakistan, to watch the first test starting in nearby Mohali on a Tuesday.

The Pakistan cricket team, who arrived last week for a seven-day tour of India, will play three tests and six one-dayers.

The Indian government has issued 10,000 visas for Pakistani fans and the hosts are eager to match the hospitality given to them during last year's series in Pakistan.


Huge banners welcoming Pakistani fans lined the highway from the border city of Amritsar with hundreds of locals greeting them at bus stops along the route.

Shakil Ashraf Butt, a businessman for Lahore, said the reception made him feel he had come from one house in his locality to another.

"I hope that soon a time will come when we will be able to visit each other without any passports or visas; that's the way it ought to be," he said.

MAKING FRIENDS  
"We're here to make friends and brothers. We want to invite them back home to Lahore."

**PRESS RELEASE**



Nehru Yuva Kendra Anantnag Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports Govt. Of India organized "Catch The Rain Project" in collaboration with District Administration Anantnag on 24-2-2021 at Qazigund Anantnag. State Director Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan Jammu & Kashmir (UT) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports Govt. of India was the Chief Guest of that programme. More than 100 youths participated in said programme. mja

از نیابت ماگام بااجلاس جناب نائب تحصیلدار صاحب ماگام عنوان: مضمون جمشیدہ بیگم زوجہ شمس دین ڈار ساکنہ ماگام برادر عطا یگی بیواؤ ایربا سرفکیٹ تحت SRO294 اشتہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست برادر بیواؤ ایربا سرفکیٹ پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے کہمہ بذیل افتزاد پر مشتمل ہے

غلام محمد میر ولد عبدالرزاق	مزدوری	62 سال
شمیہ بیگم زوجہ غلام محمد	گھریلو کام	52
عاشق حسین	مزدوری	32
نصرت بانو	زیر تعلیم	20
آسمہ محمد	زیر تعلیم	18
منان محمد	زیر تعلیم	16
رہبر محمد	زیر تعلیم	14
زاہدہ بیگم زوجہ عاشق حسین گھریلو کام		30

اسکے علاوہ عمہ کی مہمانہ آمدنی زرعی و غیر زرعی 6000 سے سرفکیٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار ماگام  
sult

از نیابت ماگام بااجلاس جناب نائب تحصیلدار صاحب ماگام عنوان: مضمون محمد اشرف گوجر کھٹانہ و محمد اسلم گوجر کھٹانہ اولادان محمد یاسین گوجر کھٹانہ ساکنہ ماگام برادر عطا یگی سرفکیٹ تحت SRO294 اشتہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست برادر برادر عطا یگی سرفکیٹ پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے کہمہ بذیل افتزاد پر مشتمل ہے

غلام محمد میر ولد عبدالرزاق	مزدوری	62 سال
شمیہ بیگم زوجہ غلام محمد	گھریلو کام	52
عاشق حسین	مزدوری	32
نصرت بانو	زیر تعلیم	20
آسمہ محمد	زیر تعلیم	18
منان محمد	زیر تعلیم	16
رہبر محمد	زیر تعلیم	14
زاہدہ بیگم زوجہ عاشق حسین گھریلو کام		30

اسکے علاوہ عمہ کی مہمانہ آمدنی زرعی و غیر زرعی 23478 سے سرفکیٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار ماگام  
sult

از نیابت ماگام بااجلاس جناب نائب تحصیلدار صاحب ماگام عنوان: مضمون محمد اشرف گوجر کھٹانہ و محمد اسلم گوجر کھٹانہ اولادان محمد یاسین گوجر کھٹانہ ساکنہ ماگام برادر عطا یگی سرفکیٹ تحت SRO294 اشتہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست برادر برادر عطا یگی سرفکیٹ پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اور اجرا کرنے مطلوب ہے کہمہ بذیل افتزاد پر مشتمل ہے

غلام محمد میر ولد عبدالرزاق	مزدوری	62 سال
شمیہ بیگم زوجہ غلام محمد	گھریلو کام	52
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زاہدہ بیگم زوجہ عاشق حسین گھریلو کام		30

اسکے علاوہ عمہ کی مہمانہ آمدنی زرعی و غیر زرعی 23478 سے سرفکیٹ زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ یوم کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار ماگام  
sult

## 'More Severe Than War': Health Workers Reflect On A Year Of COVID

Agenceis

In the year since the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic, doctors, nurses and medical staff have been at the forefront of the battle against COVID-19.

Front-line health workers around the world have faced enormous challenges to deliver essential care to patients, struggling with a lack of equipment, the constant fear of spreading the virus, and other issues such as social misconceptions relating to their work.

Often isolated, they have seen colleagues and patients die. According to Amnesty International, at least 17,000 health workers have died from COVID-19 over the last year.

New variants of the virus discovered in recent months led to a resurgence of infections. But with some countries rolling out vaccines, and health workers among the first in line to receive shots, there is some sense of hope.

Health workers around the world spoke to Al Jazeera about their experiences over the past year and their hopes and fears for the future. Below are their stories.

Dra Ana Mendez, Brazil

When Dra Ana Mendez arrives to work at the emergency COVID-19 ward at Getulio Vargas Hospital, Manaus, she has to decide which patients to stabilise and which require intubation. The city in Amazonas state is the epicentre of the outbreak in the country, where a second wave of the virus is becoming more vicious.

"We're extremely exhausted. We've been battling this virus for a year now. We deal with death every day and it's affecting us all psychologically. When the health system collapsed in January, there was also a collapse in healthcare professionals. We lost a lot of family members and colleagues. We arrived at the hospital afraid, there was a lot of insecurity.

"What is really worrying is that compared to the peak of infections last year, patients in their 30s to 50s are now developing severe symptoms. For example, we lost a young otologist colleague due to COVID complications, as well as a 44-year-old patient. We fought to keep the patient alive, it was like a warzone.

"It's shocking that people here don't respect social distancing measures or wear masks. Since the government reopened the economy, people have returned to crowded parties. We're now waiting for the third wave to hit. Despite all of this pressure, the company of my colleagues has lightened the mood. We give support to the other so that we don't fall. Otherwise, we couldn't keep going."

— Reporting by Charlotte Peet.

Dr Jehad al-Ja'idi, Gaza

Dr Jehad al-Ja'idi is the director of the intensive care department at the European Hospital in the besieged Gaza Strip. It is the main site in Gaza for patients with severe and moderate cases of COVID-19.



"In the last 20 years that I have worked in Gaza hospitals, I faced a lot of difficult situations, but COVID-19 is more severe than wars. In a war, the wounded cases come anaesthetised, or they can be anaesthetised, but with coronavirus, you see the patient in front of you losing the ability to breathe. Sometimes after you have dealt with the patient for several weeks, you may lose him suddenly regardless of his age.

"My staff and I expect to be infected any day. It is hard for our families, as we try to go back home but we avoid kissing or hugging our children, and we keep our selves isolated. Twenty percent of my staff was infected with COVID-19 while treating patients.

"The biggest challenge we faced is the shortage of PPE, and noninvasive ventilation equipment. We have limited items in the ministry storage to face this virus. The Gaza context is difficult, due to the dependency on international aid amid the Israeli siege. But there was an advantage due to the restrictions on travel – this delayed the arrival of COVID-19 compared to other countries and gave us time to prepare our hospitals to receive the first cases."

— Reporting by Hana Salah.

Dr Manggala Pasca Wardhana, Indonesia

Dr Manggala Pasca Wardhana, 36, is an obstetrician-gynaecologist at Dr Soetomo Hospital in Indonesia's second-largest city of Surabaya.

"In obstetrics and gynaecology, the impact has been quite extraordinary. Imagine that as of March 2, 325 doctors have died in Indonesia, and 20 of them were obstetrician-gynaecologists, making the proportion the second-highest after general practitioners. For childbirths, however, there could not be any delay and everyone came with conditions that needed to be taken care of immediately. Most deliveries [of patients] with COVID-19 were asymptomatic, so it was impossible for us to differentiate whether these patients had COVID-19 or not simply from interviews and regular examinations.

"I myself am a COVID-19 survivor. I contracted it while doing a Caesarean section in a case of pregnancy with a complex problem – placenta accreta which was very risky to heavy bleeding – and unfortunately, this patient was also exposed to COVID-19. The operation went well, the mother and baby survived, but unfortunately, most of the members of the operation ended up testing positive for COVID-19.

"During this pandemic, working at the hospital every day is clearly worrying. [My] family is also very worried. At home, I use one room to self-isolate until I am absolutely sure that I am not infected, and I do this periodically every time I have exposure [to the virus] or I feel unwell. What worried me first is, of course, not myself, but my family. I am really scared this could infect my family."

— Reporting by Randy Mulyanto.



A man carries a sack of wheat flour he received from the local charity Mona Relief at a camp for internally displaced people on the outskirts of Sanaa, Yemen.

## 'This is Hell': UN Food Aid Chief Visits Yemen, Fears Famine

Agenceis

GENEVA: The head of the UN food agency warned after a visit to Yemen that his underfunded organisation may be forced to seek hundreds of millions of dollars in private donations in a desperate bid to stave off widespread famine in coming months, describing conditions in the war-stricken nation as "hell."

The World Food Program needs at least USD 815 million in Yemen aid over the next six months, but has only USD 300, the agency's executive director, David Beasley, told The Associated Press in an interview. He said the agency would need another USD 1.9 billion to meet targets for the year.

Beasley visited Yemen earlier this week, including the capital of Sanaa which is under the control of Houthi rebels. He said that at a child malnutrition ward in a Sanaa hospital he saw children wasting away from lack of food.

Many, he said, were on the brink of death from entirely preventable and treatable causes, and they were the lucky ones who were receiving medical care. He said the world needs to wake up to how bad things have gotten in Yemen, particularly for the country's youngest, some of whom he had seen on hospital beds in the Sanaa hospital.

"In a children's wing or ward of a hospital, you know you normally hear crying, and laughter. There's no

crying, there's no laughter, there's dead silence," he said late Tuesday, speaking to the AP by video conference from Addis Ababa, where he had just landed from Yemen.

"I went from room to room, and literally, children that in any other place in the world would be fine, they'd get a little sick, but they'd get recovered, but not here." "This is hell," he said. "It's the worst place on earth. And it's entirely man-made."

The UN has warned that 16 million people in Yemen – or about half the population – could face serious food insecurity. Half a million people already live in famine-like conditions, in what aid organisations have called the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Some 400,000 children are in need of immediate assistance to save their lives from deadly malnutrition. Worsening fuel shortages could throw millions more into deep poverty.

Since the outbreak of Yemen's civil war six years ago, UN-led aid efforts have been chronically underfunded. This year's global fundraising drive came up short as well – more so than in previous years – because aid dollars have been shrinking as a fallout from the coronavirus pandemic.

A pledging conference last month raised a little more than half from the international community of what was needed to continue food aid services for the next year.

Yemen, already the Arab world's poorest country, has been caught in a grinding war since 2014 when Iran-backed Houthi rebels descended from their northern enclave and took over Sanaa, forcing the internationally recognised president to flee. In the spring of 2015, a US-backed, Saudi-led coalition began a destructive air campaign to dislodge the Houthis while imposing a land, sea and air embargo on Yemen.

Throughout the conflict, humanitarian agencies have faced obstacles in getting aid to those who need it most, particularly in Houthi-controlled territories; obstruction, distrust and fighting have played a role. Beasley said his organisation has made gains on these fronts particularly in access and accountability with the Houthi authorities, and now the obstacle is simply a lack of funding.

"We've turned a corner with the Houthis... in terms of cooperation, collaboration," he said.

He touted a new program by which recipients of a cash aid program are verified via a biometric system to assure it goes to the right people. It's a scheme the organisation plans to scale up, if they can get more funding.

It remains unclear where more money might come from. Beasley predicted more catastrophes in 2021 if world leaders do not prioritise helping the most vulnerable countries including Yemen, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Syria.

## China Committing Genocide Against Uighurs, Says Report

Agenceis

A US think-tank has accused the Chinese government of committing genocide against Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang, saying it has found "clear and convincing proof" that Beijing violated "each and every act" banned by the United Nations convention against genocide.

In its Tuesday report, the Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy said Chinese President Xi Jinping set in motion the effort to destroy Uighurs as a group when he launched the "People's War on Terror" in Xinjiang in 2014.

Chinese officials followed up with a campaign of mass intern-

ment, killings of Uighur leaders, forcible sterilisations, separating children from their families, and destroying the Turkic Muslim group's identity, including by demolishing mosques and other sacred sites.

The United States government, the Canadian and Dutch parliaments have already labelled China's treatment of the Uighurs genocide, while Washington has also imposed sanctions on several Chinese officials over the rights abuses in Xinjiang.

Beijing, however, rejects the genocide charge, claiming the internment camps are vocational training centres aimed at fighting "extremism".

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang

Yi told the UN Human Rights Council in February that "there has never been so-called genocide, forced labour or religious oppression in Xinjiang". He invited the UN human rights commissioner to visit the closed-off region, but did not give a time frame.

Newlines said its report was the first independent analysis of China's treatment of the Uighurs under the 1948 Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It involved the contributions of more than 30 experts, who examined all available evidence that could be collected and verified, including Chinese government communications, witness testimony and analysis of satellite imagery.

## Myanmar Cop Fled To India After Refusing "Shoot Till They Are Dead" Order

Agenceis

CHAMPHAI: When Tha Peng was ordered to shoot at protesters with his submachine gun to disperse them in the Myanmar town of Khampat on February 27, the police lance corporal said he refused.

"The next day, an officer called to ask me if I will shoot," he said. The 27-year-old refused again, and then resigned from the force.

On March 1, he said he left his home and family behind in Khampat and travelled for three days, mostly at night to avoid detection, before crossing into India's northeastern Mizoram state.

"I had no choice," Tha Peng told Reuters in an interview on Tuesday, speaking via a translator. He gave only part of his name to protect his identity. Reuters saw his police and national ID cards which confirmed the name.

Tha Peng said he and six colleagues all disobeyed the Feb. 27 order from a superior officer, whom he did not name.

Reuters could not independently verify his or other accounts gathered near the Myanmar-India border.

The description of events was similar to that given to police in Mizoram on March 1 by another Myanmar police lance corporal and three constables who crossed into India, according to a classified internal police document seen by Reuters.

The document was written by Mizoram police officials and gives biographical details of the four individuals and their account of why they fled. It was not addressed to specific people.

"As the Civil disobedience movement is gaining momentum and protest(s) held by anti-coup protesters at different places we are instructed to shoot at the protesters," they said in a joint statement to Mizoram police.

"In such a scenario, we don't have the guts to shoot at our own people who are peaceful demonstrators," they said.

Myanmar's military junta, which staged a coup on Feb. 1 and deposed the country's civilian government, did not respond

to a Reuters request for comment.

The junta has said it is acting with utmost restraint in handling what it has described as demonstrations by "riotous protesters" whom it accuses of attacking police and harming national security and stability.

Tha Peng's is among the first cases reported by the media of police fleeing Myanmar after disobeying orders from the military junta's security forces.

Daily protests against the coup are being staged across the country and security forces have cracked down. More than 60 protesters have been killed and more than 1,800 detained, the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, an advocacy group, has said.

Reuters has not been able to confirm the figures independently.

Among the detainees is Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, who led the civilian government.

DOZENS FLEE  
Around 100 people from Myanmar, mostly policemen and their families, have crossed over a porous border into India since the protests began, according to a senior Indian official.

Several have taken shelter in Mizoram's Champhai district bordering Myanmar, where Reuters interviewed three Myanmar nationals who said they had served with the police.

As well as his ID cards, Tha Peng showed an undated photograph of him wearing a Myanmar police uniform. He said he joined the force nine years ago.

Tha Peng said that, according to police rules, protesters should either be stopped by rubber bullets or shot below the knees. Reuters could not verify police policies.

But he was given orders by his superiors to "shoot till they are dead," he added.

Ngun Hlei, who said he was posted as a police constable in the city of Mandalay, said he had also received orders to shoot. He did not give a date, nor specify whether the order was to shoot to kill. He did not give details of any casualties.

## Salehi: Leader's Fatwa Against Nukes Sets Iran's Course Of Action

Agenceis

The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has once again dismissed claims that the country seeks nuclear bombs, saying that although US President Joe Biden has "promised to sort of come back to the JCPOA, ... he has not yet delivered" on that promise.

Elsewhere, Salehi complained that although US President Joe Biden has "promised to sort of come back to the JCPOA, ... he has not yet delivered" on that promise.

He was referring to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the nuclear deal that Iran signed with six world states – namely the US, Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China – in 2015 to show to the world the peaceful nature of its nuclear program.

Three years later, however, former US president Donald Trump unilaterally pulled his country out of the JCPOA and reinstated the anti-Iran sanctions that had been lifted by the accord.

The new US administration, under President Joe Biden, has indicated its willingness to rejoin the JCPOA, but conditioned that on Tehran's resumption of the commitments it has suspended under the accord in response to the US withdrawal and the other parties' failure to meet their end of the bargain.

"But nuclear bomb, as it was used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, inflicted harm on innocent people; 200,000 lives were evaporated in matters of seconds," he added.

Elsewhere, Salehi complained that although US President Joe Biden has "promised to sort of come back to the JCPOA, ... he has not yet delivered" on that promise.

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Iran's nuclear chief also drew a distinction between a nuclear bomb and a long-range missile, saying the latter is used to "hit the places that you wish to hit."

## NEWSMAKERS

## Reclusive Chinese Water Tycoon Zhong Shanshan Is Now Asia's Richest Person

Agenceis

BEIJING: Until recently, few people had even heard of the Chinese billionaire with a gruff reputation who built a fortune on China's seemingly unquenchable demand for his ubiquitous red-capped bottled water.

But reclusive Zhong Shanshan has become Asia's richest man following the stock listings last year of his Nongfu Spring mineral water and separate pharma company Wantal Biological Pharmacy Enterprise, which has tapped into massive demand for Covid-19 test kits.

Zhong's net worth has surged to \$85 billion and made him the seventh-richest person on the planet, Hurun Report, a China-based compiler of "rich lists", said last week.

Called a "lone wolf" by Chinese media for his rare public appearances and aversion to interviews, Zhong has achieved one of the fastest accumulations of wealth in history, according to Bloomberg.

He became the first Chinese entrepreneur to enter Hurun's top-ten global rich list this year, leaping out of nowhere to put him hot on the heels of Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and American investor Warren Buffett.

Not bad for someone who dropped out of school at the age of 12 during the political upheaval of China's 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, and whose later jobs included bricklayer, carpenter and news reporter, according to Chinese media.

Zhong founded Nongfu Spring in 1996 and still owns an 84 per-

cent stake in the company which, according to market research firm Mintel, holds more than a quarter of the bottled water market in China, where many people avoid tap water over health concerns.

In contrast to charismatic Alibaba founder Jack Ma -- who Zhong dethroned as China's richest man -- little is known about Nongfu's billionaire boss aside from his gruff image.

"I don't have the habit of flattery in my personality," he once told Chinese media in a rare interview.

"I don't like to deal with people and have to drink," he added, referring to a Chinese business culture that encourages excessive wine and dining to cement deals.

His fortunes have risen just as those of Chinese tech companies have slid.

Ma is now worth a comparatively paltry \$55 billion, according to Hurun, after government regulators launched an anti-monopoly investigation into his tech empire, which has pummeled Alibaba's share price and left a massive IPO by financial arm Ant Group in limbo.

Although Alibaba and Nongfu are headquartered in the humming eastern tech hub of Hangzhou, Zhong is not a regular attendee at the city's business events, one local entrepreneur told China Economic Weekly.

A former business partner told state media he once attended an industry conference with Zhong, who "went to the stage to give a speech, and offended everyone as soon as he opened his mouth", without providing details of the offending words.

## Saudi Court Upholds Activist Al-Hathloul's Sentence At Hearing

Agenceis

A Saudi court has upheld the original sentence of woman rights activist Loujain al-Hathloul, who had championed women's right to drive and for an end to Saudi Arabia's male guardianship system.

Al-Hathloul was sentenced in December to nearly six years in prison under broad cybercrime and counterterrorism laws after a lengthy trial that drew widespread international condemnation, but she was released last month having served half of her custodial sentence.

Walking to the court on Wednesday morning before the appeals hearing, al-Hathloul, 31, told reporters she hoped Riyadh's

Special Criminal Court would amend her sentence – her first public comments since her 2018 arrest. The court, however, ruled that it would stand.

Al-Hathloul was detained in May 2018 and sentenced in December to nearly six years in prison on charges that United Nations rights experts called spurious.

The court suspended two years and 10 months of her sentence, most of which had already been served. Al-Hathloul, whose release is conditional, remains under a five-year travel ban. Al-Hathloul rose to prominence in 2013 when she began publicly campaigning for women's right to drive in Saudi Arabia, an absolute monarchy.

Saudi law had previously

banned women from driving but it was changed in June 2018, allowing them to do so.

She was arrested for the first time in 2014 while attempting to drive across the border from the United Arab Emirates – where she had a valid driver's licence – to Saudi Arabia. She spent 73 days in a women's detention facility, an experience she later said helped shape her campaigning against the conservative kingdom's male guardianship system.

In recent years, the kingdom has chipped away at the heavily criticised guardianship system, which assigned each woman a male relative – a father, brother, husband or son – whose approval is needed for various big decisions throughout a woman's life.

## International Women's Day Celebrations Conclude at IUST

Observer News Service

**AWANTIPORA:** Highlighting the issues and challenges faced by women leaders and acknowledging their contribution, three-day celebrations on the occasion of International Women's Day 2021 organised by the office of Dean of Students concluded Wednesday at Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST).

Speaking on the event, Vice Chancellor Prof. Mushtaq A. Siddiqi who was also the Chief Guest during the valedictory function congratulated the Dean of Students for conducting the three day event to celebrate the International Women's Day. While speaking on the theme, 'Women in Leadership', Prof. Siddiqi reiterated that the dearth of women in leadership is a global issue and "we need to work towards improving the same".

While introducing the theme 'Women in Leadership' Assistant

Professor Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Dr. Monisa Qadiri sensitised the audience towards the abysmal presence of women in leadership positions across different sectors and the need to change the status quo.

Leading medical practitioner in women's wellness, Dr. Zahida Shah stressed upon the need to recognise the health issues specific to women's health and work towards creating comprehensive support systems to help women sail through this. Correspondent Press TV, Shahana Butt, called upon the young generation to change the patriarchal mindset and bring the idea of justice to society.

During the event, Yamen Ayaz, Fabeeha Hussain and Rahat-Ul-Ain were the student speakers and covered various themes. Assistant Prof. Department of English, Isma Hamid presented a brief report of the three day event and Assistant Prof ECE, Baziga Yousuf presented the vote of thanks.

## CRPF Personnel Arrested For Killing Wife

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** A Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel allegedly killed his wife, and injured his sister-in-law in the outskirts of Jammu on Tuesday evening.

Soon after the incident the CRPF personnel identified as Constable Madan Singh Chib was arrested by the police. A CRPF spokesperson said Chib was from the 166th battalion.

He was posted at the CRPF sector headquarters in Ban Talab from where he had gone home. Tuesday evening, he shot his wife

and sister-in-law, he said.

"While his wife died on the spot, his sister-in-law suffered injuries on her foot. She was taken to GMC hospital from where she has been referred to a military hospital in Sattwar because her husband is an army personnel," an official said.

He said the CRPF personnel had an argument with his family early in the morning. As tempers ran high, he opened fire from his service weapon. His eight-year-old daughter was also present at the spot. She is safe. Police has registered a case and started investigations. (With CNS inputs)

## Online System For Various Services Inaugurated

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Commissioner Secretary, Labour and Employment (L&E), Saurabh Bhagat Wednesday inaugurated online system for auto renewal of license, online services for submission of integrated consolidated return under different Labour laws and availability of online dashboard.

Under these online services, there will be auto generation of licenses under Shops and Establishment Act, Contract Labour Act, Interstate Migrant Workers Act and Factories Act.

On the occasion, the Commissioner Secretary also inaugurated a dashboard for e-services provided by Labour Department. The dashboard will highlight the

registrations done along with applications pending at the department end.

The dashboard will be updated regularly for registrations and renewals granted under Shops and Establishments Act, Contract Labour Act, Establishment under Interstate Migrant Workman Act, Factories Act, Registration Renewal under Boiler Act.

Till now an employer had to furnish different annual returns under different Labour Acts. But under this system, an employer will furnish a unified single annual return under different labour codes like Code on Wages, Social Security Code, Industrial Relation Code and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Condition code through online mode.

## Wine Traders Concerned Over Draft Excise Policy

Press Trust of India

**JAMMU:** A day after Jammu and Kashmir administration released the draft excise policy for 2021-22, Jammu Wine Traders Association (JWTA) on Wednesday raised concerns over the proposal to allot liquor vendors through the e-auction process.

The association said the traders may lose their livelihood if not being able to compete in the e-auction process.

The policy, which was for the first time placed in the public domain before its issuance, envisages allotment of liquor shops to the residents of the Union Territory through e-auction.

## Placement Drive Conducted At ITI Anantnag

Observer News Service

**ANANTNAG:** Various private companies offered counselling to the job aspirants and also conducted on-spot placement drive in Anantnag during a Job Mela that was held at ITI.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag Anshul Garg was the Chief Guest on the occasion. The programme as part of PMKVY was organised by District Skill Committee in collaboration with ITI Anantnag.

Around 18 firms including Peaks Auto Pvt Ltd; Tata Fair deal Motors, Kashmir Electricals, Zenith Group etc displayed their stalls to show-case the opportunities being provided by them. Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that the aim of organising counselling cum placement drive was to educate the youth about various opportunities in the private and semi-government sector.

He said the unemployed educated youth should equip themselves with requisite

# Lavender Cultivation Top Choice Of Bhaderwah Farmers



Observer News Service

**DODA:** District Administration Doda has ramped up its Mission Mode Stance for increasing agricultural production with a special focus on making the farmers of the district "Atmanirbhar" with a special focus on the promotion of lucrative lavender cultivation.

As part of the mission, the District Development Commissioner, Dr Sagar D Doifode today inaugurated three distillation units at different locations of the Bhaderwah - installed by the CSIR-IIIM to provide the facility of extraction of essential oils from Lavender and Marigold at the nearest locations.

Addressing the farmers at Community hall Bhaderwah, the DDC said that District Administration was making persistent efforts to introduce and promote the new alternative farming in the district

to make the farmers Atmanirbhar in real manner.

The DDC informed that initially the Lavender was cultivated on only a meager quantum of 30 to 40 kanal of land, but after promotional campaign a humongous growth has been seen in last 2 years and the cultivation has jumped to around 800 Kanal of land in Bhaderwah area alone.

The farmers are now seeing the profit and potential of this cultivation and thus shifted from conventional farming to lavender cultivation as an alternative means of livelihood, the DDC added.

The DDC said that the upcoming Institute of High Altitude Medicinal Plant was bound to give boost to the new varieties of Aromatic and Medicinal plant cultivation in the Bhaderwah and its adjoining areas.

The DDC said that recently the district administration has success-

fully pushed GI of Cucchi Mushroom and in the upcoming days will push the GI for lavender of Bhaderwah, besides said that 2 more distillation units will be installed in the Bhaderwah in the coming days.

The DDC asked the scientists of CSIR-IIIM to spread massive awareness among the farmers regarding the new farming techniques. He assured them that the district administration is ready to extend full cooperation to meet the objective of making farmers Atmanirbhar in letter and spirit.

Later, the DDC Doda distributed mementos among the innovative farmers and those who have just started the lavender cultivation as a source of their livelihood. Among others present during the program were ADC Bhaderwah Rakesh Kumar; DFO Bhaderwah; Chief Scientist from CSIR-IIIM Jammu, Principal Scientists besides PRI.

## Dr Soz Calls Stresses On Economic Independence Of Women

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Department of Lifelong Learning, University of Jammu organised a one day workshop on Gender sensitisation here Wednesday in collaboration with Dogra College of Education, Bari Brahmana Jammu. The theme of the workshop was "Gender Sensitisation: Need of the Hour". The workshop also commemorated International Women's Day 2021. Dr. Naheed Soz, Managing Director, Jammu and Kashmir Women's Development Corporation was the chief guest of the function. Dr. Kavita Suri, Director, Department of Lifelong Learning, University of Jammu was the expert speaker of the workshop.

Speaking at the workshop, Dr. Naheed Soz, Managing Director, Jammu and Kashmir Women Development Corporation stressed the need for empowering and giving more respect to women for progress and prosperity of the society and thus achieving financial empowerment. She said that when power is given to women, they will be able to change the society in a harmonious manner with dignity and integrity. She also said that livelihoods were important components for women and there was a need to provide a source of livelihood to the women so that they could have a better life.

"The women must be provided skilled training for self reliance

through tailoring, weaving and handicraft work, service sector work, preferably the skill crafts," added Dr soz

Dr. Kavita Suri, Director, Department of Lifelong Learning, University of Jammu was the expert speaker of the workshop. While interacting with the students, she said that gender sensitization is the need of the hour and we all must start it from our homes. She discussed in detail the concept of sex, gender and gender sensitization. Student participants expressed their views on the theme and interacted with the expert asking several questions. Dr. Suri discussed the issue with videos, and real life examples from the society.

## DIPR Cultural Programme In Udhampur

Observer News Service

**UDHAMPUR:** Department of Information & Public Relations Cultural Wing, Jammu, in collaboration with District Information Centre, Udhampur organised a symposium cum Cultural programme on the theme COVID-19 Do's & Don'ts, here at Bhartiya Vidya Mandir High School.

Principal of the host school, Renu Sharma was the chief guest on the occasion.

In all 8 students of the school participated in the symposium contest and threw light on the burning topic and shared their views regarding COVID-19.

Divyanshi Chalotra of class 9th clinched first position, while Manvi Thakur of class 6th and Priyanka Bandal of class 9th secured second and third positions, respectively. Besides, Sunaina Chalotra of class 7th bagged consolation prize.

Sapna Sharma, Asha Devi and Bandhana acted as judges while

senior Artist of Information Department Suresh Sharma conducted the proceeding of the programme.

While addressing the students, the chief guest applauded the efforts of information department for organizing the awareness programme aimed at to create awareness among the students as well as general public regarding COVID-19. She urged upon the students to spread the message of Corona disease among the common masses and urged the department to hold more such events in the near future.

Artists of Cultural wing DIPR Jammu presented theme based scintillating cultural programmes which mesmerized by the audience.

Later, Prizes and merit certificates were also distributed among the winners.

## DDC Precedence List Undermines Panchayati Raj Institution: Congress

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPC) Wednesday termed the J&K Government's order of placing DDC chairmen, vice-chairmen and members at bottom of precedence list as unfortunate and betrayal with the elected representatives in J&K.

In a statement JKPC President G.A. Mir lashed out at BJP government for failing to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institution, saying that the false slogans and promises with regard to empowering democratic institutions has once again exposed the mindset of BJP government.

Mir strongly urged the Govern-

ment to make necessary changes in the precedence list that ensures that DDC chairmen, vice-chairmen and members exercise their authority for which they have been chosen and authorised to work for the welfare of people.

"We are committed strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at all levels," Mir said in the statement.

He said government must stop undermining the authority DDCs and other democratic institutions, in the larger interest of common people. The precedence list issued by the Govt amounts to undermine the authority of vital institution (DDCs) of public importance, which deserves to be rectified, very immediately, G.A. Mir said.

## JKSPDC BoD Meeting Demands Extension Of Time For Parnai HEP Project

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Khan Wednesday chaired 77th Board of Directors meeting of Jammu and Kashmir State Power Development Corporation Limited at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar.

The meeting held threadbare discussion on the appointment of Managing Director of JKSPDC, Sale of Power of BHEP, Implementation of 850 MW Rattle HEP through a Joint Venture

Company between JKSPDC and NHPC Limited, Development of Solar Power plant at available site of Gas Turbine Stage II, Pampore, Extension of Time for EPC Contract and PMC for Implementation of 37.5MW Parnai HEP, MOU for development of Hydropower Projects and Progress thereof, Status report and related issues in case of various works related to 1856 MW Sawalkote HEP and status of 9MW Dah HEP & 9MW Hanu HEP and 66kv Transmission Line, now in UT of Ladakh.

## Empowerment Of Weaker Sections Imperative For Economic Emancipation: Dr Farooq

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah Wednesday called for socio-political empowerment of weaker sections of the society, saying their active involvement in decision making will greatly help in their economic emancipation.

"The public spirited men and women should come forward and work with missionary zeal and spirit on ground towards establishment of society based on social justice, dignity and equality," Dr Abdullah said while addressing a function organised by SC Cell of National Conference.

He said National Conference has all along provided platform



and opportunities to the weaker sections and ensured their active participation in decision making. He recalled how the selfless leaders of the SC community worked tirelessly for upliftment of the poor people. This spirit is to be imbibed by the cadre in order to achieve

the objective of establishing egalitarian society, he added.

National Conference President also urged the cadre to work for strengthening amity and brotherhood which is the cherished philosophy of the party. He said all religions preach love, compassion and

brotherhood and this message has to be followed in letter and spirit. We owe the posterity a better place to live in, which can be ensured only by emulating the spirit if sacrifice, he added.

Dr Farooq Abdullah touched a volley of subjects, ranging from political developments of August 2019 to the obtaining political situation in Jammu and Kashmir, as also across the country.

Dr Farooq Abdullah also expressed concern over the hike in fuel prices, saying this has hit common man the most. The soaring petrol and diesel prices has led to increase in the transportation charges of essential commodities, which has broken the backbone of the poor people.

## Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION SOPORE. NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Fresh NIT No- 269 of RnB-Sopore of 2020-2021 e-tendering DATED- 10.03.2021.

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

S. No.	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ DOC (In Rupees)	Time of Completion In days	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	M. H of Account	Position of AAA
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
01	Improvements/upgradation of various link roads at Rafiabab ( Upgradation of Alsafa Colony C road) by way of Providing and laying Nallah Muck filling in patches/ stretches and WBM grade 2 <sup>nd</sup> in full.	3.00 lacs	200/-	15 days	16. 03. 2021	DEE	4059 State-sector	Accorded

Position of funds: Available

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

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	10.03.2021
02.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 10.03.2021 (10.00 A.M) to 15.03.2021 (4.00P.M)
03.	Bid submission start date	10.03.2021 from (04.00P.M)
04.	Bid submission end date	15.03.2021 upto (4.00 P.M)
05.	Date & time of opening Bids (on line)	16.03.2021 at (12.00 P.M) in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Chitnan in favour of Executive Engineer, R&B Division Sopore (tender inviting authority) and the date of challan should be in between the date of start of bid and Bid submission end date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Division Sopore.

3. All Bidders have to submit Bid security Declaration form instead of Earnest money as per circular of Finance Department ( Bid Security declaration form is as per Annexure "A" below.

4. The 1<sup>st</sup> lowest bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 02 days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work/DLP.

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

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

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

7.1 Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in in acquait bid submission process.

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

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

7.4 Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1

7.5 Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid.

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

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

For and on behalf of,

Lt. Governor of J&K,

No:- 16391-16411

Dated:- 10.03.021

DIPK-14784/20

Executive Engineer,  
R&B Division Sopore

KASHMIR  
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

## Congress in limbo

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has become a subject of intense discussion in Indian politics. Questions are once again being raised about his capacity to fight the overarching figure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. An influential section of public opinion wants him to step aside and let another leader take over the party. But despite promising to hold elections for another leader of the party, Congress high command has chosen to delay the exercise. Meanwhile, the party is continuing its losing streak. Its rank and file are demoralised. It is losing even senior leaders, the latest being Congress veteran PC Chacko who complained that there was "no democracy left" in the Congress and not sparing even the "high command" in his recriminations.

This is the party's state of affairs at a time when elections are being held in four states - West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam- and the union territory of Puducherry from March 27. The outcome of these elections will be crucial to the future direction of India's politics. The elections in West Bengal and Assam would be even more significant.

Bengal is poised for a high-stakes battle between the BJP and the two-time Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's TMC. The TMC has been losing leaders - including her most trusted strategists to the BJP. Congress, on the other hand, has been reduced to a peripheral role in the state. The party faces a similar situation in three other states. It has some chance in Puducherry. Overall, the Congress is in dire straits in almost all the states. And it seems to be doing little to stem the rot. As things stand, Rahul Gandhi is unable to lead and the party isn't appointing another leader also. Things, as a result, are in a limbo. Congress is unlikely to emerge as a force unless it reinvents itself.

It is now clear that the Modi wave remains alive and kicking. After a few reverses here and there over the past six years, Modi's appeal has only grown stronger. He is now certain to win many more Assembly polls, more so, the upcoming election in West Bengal unless Congress and wider opposition gets its act right. If no credible opposition emerges from the shadows in the near future, a prospect which looks bleak.

Rahul Gandhi's term at the helm has shown that he is not just up to the task. The situation is not any better among other parties. There is no major pan-India leader to take on the persona of Modi. While Gandhi and many others look like minions, the likes of Mamta Banerjee and Mayawati who once showed signs of shaping up into credible rivals have too paled into significance. The caste based parties in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar who were only hope to stop Modi's juggernaut have bitten the dust. This situation calls for the opposition within the country, especially the Congress to reorient their politics to challenge the omnipotent nature of the BJP. But this looks unlikely to happen in near future.

OTHER OPINION

## The Biden initiative

With a few tweaks to the Trump Administration's Afghanistan policy, the Biden Administration in the United States has signalled both continuity and change. Like former President Donald Trump, President Joe Biden wants to turn the page on America's ill-fated 20-year-long excursion in Afghanistan. May 1 is the date for withdrawal of US troops. But unlike the Trump Administration, which was willing to throw the government in Kabul under the bus for a deal with the Taliban, the message from the new draft proposals drawn up by the Biden team to "jump start" the Afghan process is that it is willing to hold the government's hand at least part of the way.

As of now, uncertainties of the previous process remain. The draft proposals have to be acceptable to the two sides in Afghanistan. There is no indication that the Taliban, which stood firm at Doha that there would be no ceasefire, will agree to one now, in the spring, which in Afghanistan is usually the season for a new offensive. The Taliban has made no official response yet to the proposals. Its benefactor, Pakistan, is silent too. The government in Kabul has offered no official comment. The draft political proposals and the "guiding principles" lay down that the future must be built on the existing constitution but the word democracy does not figure anywhere.

From Delhi's point of view, the Biden proposals are a huge shift. The US now wants all regional players - Russia, China, Pakistan, India, Iran and the United States - to discuss a "unified" approach to supporting peace in Afghanistan under UN auspices. Cut out by the Trump Administration and Pakistan, India had no role in the previous process, but was keen not to appear a spoiler, and had declared its support for an Afghan-led process and the talks at Doha. Finding common ground at the high table could prove to be challenging, as each country's priority would be to safeguard its own interests. A lot will depend on Pakistan and India, and how their recent re-commitment to ceasefire at the LoC can contribute towards finding peace in Afghanistan.

The Indian Express



# It's Not Funny: Of Pranks, Misogyny and Ableism

MUDA TARIQ

**‘The prank is blatantly ableist using disability as a mocking comedy bait. It was an ableist micro-aggression that communicated an insult. Such disparaging content only fosters discrimination against the already marginalized groups. The mystery of good humor is easy to decode – it shouldn't have unfunny consequences!’**

What makes a prank funny? The point in case is Red FM's comedy prank call played on a delivery executive, ironically aired on International Women's Day. In the prank, a popular Kashmiri comedian and radio jockey plays the role of a husband irked over his wife's shopping habits, and the delivery executive is dragged into their argument. Had the prank call been funny, I wouldn't be dissecting it, but here I am.

To begin with, the RJ plays an intrusive husband who needs to know who his wife is talking to and even forcibly gets into the conversation between the wife and the delivery executive. It only normalizes the stringent patriarchal surveillance of women by their partners or parents as an exercise of control over them. Adding to that, the comedian harps on a gender stereotype of women having notorious reputations as 'shopaholics' and 'spend-thrifts'. It implies how women have no agency over financial resources as the husband objects to her expenses and at the same time, by asking the delivery executive to deliver the parcel to her natal home, the husband implied that his wife has no rights over their home. It goes on to normalize aggression and violent husbands whereby the wife tells the delivery executive how her husband is holier than thou, and only sometimes reacts with violence out of anger. Can there ever be a virtue in violence?

**Misogyny 1: Humour 0.**

The prank is blatantly ableist using disability as a mocking comedy bait. The comedian makes jokes about the delivery executive's speech impediment, asking him if he was talking through a pipe (twice), repeating gibberish, and complaining how he has difficulty comprehending the delivery executive's words. The phenomenon of using disability for quick laughter isn't new. However, the only time disability is funny is when a disabled person makes the joke;

other times, making a circus out of someone's disability is just cruel. People with visible disabilities might already operate from a place of insecurity and fear. Such jokes are then tasteless as it breaks a person's self-confidence and affects their emotional and mental health. The prank was an ableist micro-aggression that communicated an insult.

**Ableism 1: Humour 0.**

The prank was received with a lot of criticism for its ableism online, so much so that the RJ posted an 'apology' on his social media handles. The RJ is his 'apology' video talks about

who find it difficult to be a part of the mainstream. His content reflects the nature of our society and our society is misogynist, ableist, and classist. Popular creators like him need to be both accountable and responsible for the large impact they have on our society. Through his content, as he also emphasizes in his 'apology', he is reaching real people and influencing real lives, and with that comes a responsibility that has to be assumed carefully. This also extends to platforms like the radio stations which we listen to for information and entertainment. They need to take a proactive approach to ensure they are not catering to the existing

**‘Needless to say, some people found the prank funny and defended it. However, that doesn't make it right as our society gets a thrill out of poking fun at people who find it difficult to be a part of the mainstream.’**

how entertainment has always been his calling and that when he is writing his content, he only wishes to make the audience laugh keeping 'decency' in mind. He constantly reiterates how it's beyond his imagination to hurt someone through his content and his motivations are to help people combat the stress and trauma. However, there is a thin line between offering an explanation for one's actions and using those explanations to escape responsibility. Any apology is ingenuine when it displays a lack of compassion for people who are hurt and rightfully so.

One must never try to defend the indefensible - misogyny and ableism. Although it is normalized in our society, it's still far from decent.

Needless to say, some people found the prank funny and defended it. However, that doesn't make it right as our society gets a thrill out of poking fun at people

ills in our societies or using that for easy laughter. People like the RJ should act as agents of social change or at least make an effort to create a safe space for people from marginalized communities. Such disparaging content only fosters discrimination against the already marginalized groups. The mystery of good humor is easy to decode - it shouldn't have unfunny consequences!

*Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer*

*Muda Tariq is a graduate in Political Science from Lady Shri Ram College, University of Delhi, and is currently pursuing a degree in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding. Email: work.mudatariq@gmail.com*



OBSERVER MAIL

All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O.Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190001  
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

## Meritocracy

This is in response to a letter published in daily KO on 10th March called, "Marks Do not Matter". I don't fully agree with the writer when she is saying marks don't matter. I just want to argue my case here to prove that they do in fact matter. We must stop being idealistic and look at the things through a realistic prism. Currently we are

living in meritocratic society, where people enjoy the status as per their merit and these marks are part of that meritocracy race. So, one can't rule out with the stroke of a pen that marks don't matter, when in fact, they do.

Getting good grades are a reflection of one's hard work. I have never seen a mediocre person, who doesn't work hard getting good marks. In fact,

only those people who burn their midnight oil and prefer reading while others are sleeping get good grades.

Nowadays, this line "marks don't matter" has become a cliché used mostly by people for whom grapes taste sour. We must not steal the thunder from people who have worked hard to get good grades in examinations and these marks are the form of

positive reinforcement given by board authorities to boost the confidence of students to achieve bigger in life.

True, don't get carried away by these marks. Instead, make them a platform to launch big in life. As they say, "Abhi Ishq kay Intihaan aur bhi Hain"

Malik Javid  
malikjavid86@gmail.com

# How can vitamin D save us from COVID-19 ?

QADEER MIR

**By decreasing inflammatory pathways, there are less chances of multi organ failure and other complications. Vitamin D deficiency is widespread. The main risk factors were attributed to elderly women, higher latitude, winter season, less sunlight exposure, dark skin, less intake of vitamin D**

When we move from one place to another, during that time our body requires energy not only for the movement but also for respiration and other metabolic activities. We get this energy from nutrients like carbohydrates, fats and proteins which are called micronutrients. On the other end, vitamins and minerals don't provide us energy but are essential for the normal functioning of the body. Vitamins include Vitamin A, D, E, K, C and B-complex.

One of the important vitamins is vitamin D. It plays an important role in calcium homeostasis. In 2020 during the peak of the COVID-19 crisis, many studies were done on vitamin D and its role in curing COVID-19.

Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin. Its availability, absorption and transportation is associated with fats. It functions like a steroid hormone. For its functioning, it requires a site where it should hold fast. The site where it binds on a cell is called a receptor. The receptor for vitamin D is present inside the cell.

Vitamin D is found in animals in the form vitamin D3 (Cholecalciferol) and in plants it is found in the form of vitamin D2 (Ergocalciferol).

Vitamin D3 is also made in the human body. During cholesterol synthesis, a product called 7-Dehydrocholesterol is formed. This 7-Dehydrocholesterol is present in our skin and on its exposure to ultraviolet B rays, it gets converted to cholecalciferol.

Major sources of vitamin D include fish, liver and mushroom. Cholecalciferol when taken from diet or produced in skin is transported to the liver. In the liver there is an enzyme called 25-hydroxylase. It hydroxylates (adds hydrogen) at the 25th position and forms 25-hydroxycholecalciferol. In kidney 25-hydroxycholecalciferol is hydroxylated at position 1, forming 1,25-dihydroxycholecalciferol (1,25-DHCC) or calcitriol. The main function of calcitriol is to regulate calcium absorption and homeostasis. Calcitriol can also perform other functions. It can bind to its receptor called Vitamin D receptor in immune cells like macrophages.

After this interaction, certain genes will get activated and mRNA will be formed by a process known as transcription. This mRNA undergoes a process called translation to form protein. These proteins formed are of different types but some of them are Cathelicidins and Defensins. They both are antimicrobial peptides.

Cathelicidins are mostly found in cells like neutrophils, monocytes, mast cells, dendritic cells and macrophages. Cathelicidins increase vascular permeability and can also stimulate macrophages. They damage cell membranes of microorganisms like SARS-CoV2 by cleaving viral structures.

Cathelicidins range in size from 12 to 80 amino acid residues and have a wide range of structures. Defensins are small protein. They are typically 10-15 amino acid in length. They also damage



cell membrane by punching holes in viruses like RSV, Rhinovirus, SARS-CoV2.

## Anti Inflammatory Pathway

Both anti inflammatory and pro inflammatory pathways involve many cells and substances like cytokines. A student with good knowledge of immunology will be able to understand it much more easily but I will try to make it more understandable.

Phagocytosis is the process of engulfing any substance. Cells called Macrophage are the major phagocytic cells in the human body. When they encounter any virus like SARS-CoV2 they engulf it. SARS-CoV2 virus has a crown like appearance and its due to s-peptide. These s-peptides are present on outside of SARS-CoV2 which give the virus crown like appearance. This is the reason virus is called corona virus. Corona means crown like.

So, after phagocytosis macrophages express a piece of dead virus like s-peptide of SARS-CoV2 outside on MHC-II. There is another cell called naive helper-T cell that binds with macrophage. For this interaction receptors are required. There is a CD4 receptor on a naive helper-T cell that will bind with MHC-II on macrophages.

After this interaction some chemical substances called cytokines are released like Interleukin (IL-4) from macrophages. When these IL-4 come in contact with naive helper-T cells, they get converted to T-helper 2 (TH2). Now, this T-helper 2 cell will start releasing cytokines like IL-5.

These cytokines will activate another cell called B-lymphocytes and will differentiate B-lymphocytes into memory cells and plasma cells. Plasma cells will start releasing antibodies. These antibodies can activate the complement system. Complement system will lead to punching holes in the virus and kill it. These antibodies can even bind to s-peptide of another SARS-CoV2 and stop it from attaching to host cells. So, this pathway is fighting against the virus and protecting us against it.

## Pro-inflammatory Pathway

This pathway is very important to understand the deficiency of vitamin-D and its effects on the body, especially on immune system cells. If a person has

a deficiency of vitamin-D, a pro-inflammatory pathway will be activated more. Here again, after phagocytosis macrophage will express a piece of s-peptide of SARS-CoV2 on MHC-II. Again, MHC-II will bind to CD4 receptor of naive helper-T cell.

Naive helper-T cell will start releasing cytokines IL-12 not IL-4. These IL-12 will convert naive helper-T cell to T-helper 1 cell (TH1) not T-helper 2 cell.

Now, TH1 cells will start releasing cytokines like gamma interferon. These cytokines will attract more macrophages for phagocytosis of microorganisms like SARS-CoV2. In turn macrophages will start releasing a lot of cytokines like IL-1, TNF- $\alpha$ , IL-6, IL-8.

These cytokines will lead to massive inflammation and lead to a condition called cytokine storm. These cytokines can also act on many organs and can lead to multi-organ failure. IL-6 can act on heart cells and can lead to myocardial infarction.

In lungs, massive inflammation can lead to acute respiratory distress syndrome. In the liver, it can lead to increase in fibrinogen, ferritin, CRP and D-dimer. They all are acute phase reactive proteins. Increase in CRP will lead to inflammation of blood vessels and leads to atherosclerosis which can lead to formation of blood clots.

According to an article titled "Pulmonary Vascular Endothelialitis, Thrombosis, and Angiogenesis in Covid-19", in The New England Journal of Medicine.

According to the study, 7 lungs were obtained during autopsy from patients who died from Covid-19 and compared them with 7 lungs obtained during autopsy from patients who died from acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) secondary to influenza A(H1N1) infection and 10 age-matched, uninfected control lungs.

Results showed that the lungs from patients with Covid-19 showed distinctive vascular features, consisting of severe endothelial injury associated with the presence of intracellular virus and disrupted cell membranes. Histologic analysis of pulmonary vessels in patients with Covid-19 showed widespread thrombosis. Alveolar capillary microthrombi were 9 times as prevalent in patients with Covid-19 as in patients with influenza.

So, cytokine storms play an important role in clot formation. Optimal quantity of vitamin D in blood will stimulate macrophages more. Vitamin D will stimulate an anti inflammatory pathway. T-helper 2 cell will release IL-10 which will also stop the pro inflammatory pathway.

By decreasing inflammatory pathways, there are less chances of multi organ failure and other complications. Vitamin D deficiency is widespread. The main risk factors were attributed to elderly women, higher latitude, winter season, less sunlight exposure, dark skin, less intake of vitamin D. Vitamin D deficiency is also associated with diabetes, CVD and hypertension. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to the onset of diabetes. Diabetes is initiated by the onset of insulin resistance. B-cells can overcome the resistance by releasing more insulin. Thus, preventing hyperglycaemia.

Due to excessive reactive oxygen species (ROS) and Ca<sup>2+</sup> results in massive cell death and leads to onset of diabetes. Due to optimal quantity of vitamin D normal level of ROS and Ca<sup>2+</sup> can be maintained.

Vitamin D deficiency is also associated with hypertension. The prevalence of hypertension in adults is approximately 29% with an estimated 1.6 billion cases of hypertension expected in 2025.

Kidneys produce an important hormone called renin. Renin converts a protein called angiotensinogen into angiotensin-1 and, angiotensin 1 is converted to angiotensin-2 by angiotensin converting enzyme 1 (ACE-1). This angiotensin-2 can lead to many problems. It causes vasoconstriction thereby increasing blood pressure.

Angiotensin-2 also causes inflammation and fibrosis in lungs. There is another enzyme called angiotensin converting enzyme 2 (ACE-2) that converts angiotensin-2 to angiotensin 1-7. It's a vasodilator substance, it also decreases inflammation and fibrosis. In patients affected by SARS-CoV2, virus inhibits ACE-2 and due to that there is less formation of angiotensin 1-7, due to which there will be hypertension, fibrosis and injury to lungs.

The optimum amount of vitamin D in the body can increase the activity of ACE2 and can prevent hypertension. It also stops viruses from damaging lungs. Different parts of the world measure Vitamin D in blood by using different units. Deficient being > 30ng/ml or 75nmol/l. Optimal being 51-70ng/ml or 126-175nmol/l.

*Views expressed are the author's own responsibility and are not a substitute for medical advice*

*The author can be reached at qadeermir07@gmail.com*

## 5 Answers about Vaccines and COVID Testing

MERU SHEEL, CHARLEE J LAW,  
CYRA PATEL

Do the vaccines give you COVID, or make you test positive for COVID? Does the vaccine affect other tests? Do we still need to get COVID tested if we have symptoms, even after getting the shot? And will we still need COVID testing once more of the population gets vaccinated?

We look at the evidence to answer five common questions about the impact of COVID vaccines on testing.

### 1. Will the vaccine give me COVID?

The short answer is "no". That's because the vaccines approved for use don't contain live COVID virus.

The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine contains an artificially generated portion of viral mRNA (messenger ribonucleic acid). This carries the specific genetic instructions for your body to make the coronavirus's "spike protein", against which your body mounts a protective immune response.

The AstraZeneca vaccine uses a different technology. It packages viral DNA into a viral vector "carrier" based on a chimpanzee adenovirus. When this is delivered into your arm, the DNA prompts your body to produce the spike protein, again stimulating an immune response.

Any vaccine side-effects, such as fever or feeling fatigued, are usually mild and temporary. These are signs the vaccines are working to boost your immune system, rather than signs of COVID itself. These symptoms are also common after

routine vaccines.

### 2. Will the COVID vaccine make me test positive?

No, a COVID vaccine will not affect the results of a diagnostic COVID test.

The current gold-standard diagnostic test is known as nucleic acid PCR testing. This looks for the mRNA (genetic material) of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This is a marker of current infection.

This is the test the vast majority of people have when they line up at a drive-through testing clinic, or attend a COVID clinic at their local hospital.

Yes, the Pfizer vaccine contains mRNA. But the mRNA it uses is only a small part of the entire viral RNA. It also cannot make copies of itself, which would be needed for it to be in sufficient quantity to be detected. So it cannot be detected by a PCR test.

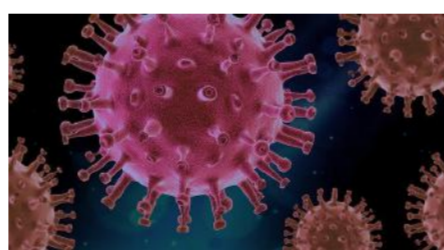
The AstraZeneca vaccine also only contains part of the DNA but is inserted in an adenovirus carrier that cannot replicate so cannot give you infection or a positive PCR test.

### 3. How about antibody testing?

While PCR testing is used to look for current infection, antibody testing — also known as serology testing — picks up past infections.

Laboratories look to see if your immune system has raised antibodies against the coronavirus, a sign your body has been exposed to it. As it takes time for antibodies to develop, testing positive with an antibody test may indicate you were infected weeks or months ago.

But your body also produces antibodies as a response to vaccination. That's the way



**Any vaccine side-effects, such as fever or feeling fatigued, are usually mild and temporary. These are signs the vaccines are working to boost your immune system, rather than signs of COVID itself. These symptoms are also common after routine vaccines.**

it can recognise SARS-CoV-2, the next time it meets it, to protect you from severe COVID.

So as COVID vaccines are rolled out, and people develop a vaccine-induced antibody response, it may become difficult to differentiate between someone who has had COVID in the past and someone who

was vaccinated a month ago. But this will depend on the serology test used.

The good news is that antibody testing is not nearly as common as PCR testing. And it's only ordered under limited and rare circumstances.

For instance, when someone tests positive with PCR, but they are a false positive due to the characteristics of the test, or have fragments of virus lingering in the respiratory tract from an old infection, public health experts might request an antibody test to see whether that person was infected in the past. They might also order an antibody test during contact tracing of cases with an unknown source of infection.

### 4. If I get vaccinated, do I still need a COVID test if I have symptoms?

Yes, we will continue to test for COVID as long as the virus is circulating anywhere in the world.

Even though the COVID vaccines are looking promising in preventing people from getting seriously sick or dying, they won't provide 100% protection.

Real-world data suggests some vaccinated people can still catch the virus, but they usually only get mild disease. We are unsure whether vaccinated people will be able to potentially pass it to others, even if they don't have any symptoms. So it's important people continue to get tested.

Furthermore, not everyone will be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. For instance, in Australia, current guidelines exclude people under 16 years of age, and those who are allergic to ingredients in the vaccine. And although pregnant women are not ruled out from receiving the vac-

cine, it is not routinely recommended. This means a proportion of the population will remain susceptible to catching the virus.

We also are unsure about how effective vaccines will be against emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants. So we will continue to test to ensure people are not infected with these strains.

We know testing, detecting new cases early and contact tracing are the core components of the public health response to COVID, and will continue to be a priority from a public health perspective.

Minimum numbers of daily COVID tests are also needed so we can be confident the virus is not circulating in the community. As an example, New South Wales aims for 8,000 or more tests a day to maintain this peace of mind.

Continued vigilance and high rates of testing for COVID will also be important as we enter the flu season. That's because the only way to differentiate between COVID and influenza (or any other respiratory infection) is via testing.

### 5. Will testing for COVID stop as time goes on?

It is unlikely our approach to COVID testing will change in the immediate future. However, as COVID vaccines are rolled out and since COVID is likely to become endemic and stay with us for a long time, the acute response phase to the pandemic will end.

So COVID testing may become part of managing other infectious diseases and part of how we respond to other ongoing health priorities.

*By Arrangement with The Conversation*

# Individuals with higher income likely to feel more proud and confident

**Agencies**

People with higher incomes, in general, feel more proud, more confident and less apprehensive in comparison to those individuals who earn a lower income, although they may not feel more compassionate, caring, or cherishing, showed the findings of a recent study.

In a study of data from 162 countries, researchers found consistent evidence that higher income predicts whether people feel more positive "self-regard emotions," including confidence, pride, and determination. The study was published in the journal American

Psychological Association. Lower-income had the opposite effect and predicted negative self-regard emotions, such as sadness, fear, and shame. The research was published online in the journal Emotion.

The findings were similar in both high-income countries and developing countries, said lead researcher Eddie M.W. Tong, PhD, an associate professor of psychology at the National University of Singapore.

"The effects of income on our emotional well-being should not be underestimated," he said. "Having more money can inspire confidence and determination while

earning less is associated with gloom and anxiety."

In what they called the most comprehensive analyses to date, the researchers conducted an independent analysis and a meta-analysis of five previous studies that included a survey of more than 1.6 million people in 162 countries.

The analyses also included a category of emotions people feel about others, such as love, anger or compassion. Unlike self-regard emotions, the studies didn't find a consistent link between income level and how people feel about others.

"Having more money doesn't necessarily make a person more

compassionate and grateful, and greater wealth may not contribute to building a more caring and tolerant society," Tong said.

The findings from the study are correlational, so the study can't prove if higher-income causes these emotions or if there is just a link between them.

Levels of income also may have long-term effects. In an analysis of a longitudinal survey including more than 4,000 participants in the United States, the researchers found that higher income predicted higher levels of self-regard emotions about 10 years after the initial survey of participants, while low income predicted greater levels of



negative self-regard emotions, such as fear and shame. "Policies aimed at raising the income of the average person and boosting the economy may contribute to emotional well-being for individuals," Tong said. "However, it may not necessarily contribute to emotional experiences that are important for communal harmony."

## Apple may launch AR 'contact lenses' in 10 years

**Agencies**

Now analyst Ming-Chi Kuo has claimed that Apple will release augmented reality "contact lenses" in the 2030s.

According to MacRumors, Kuo said the lenses will bring electronics from the era of "visible computing" to "invisible computing." "We predict that Apple's MR/AR product roadmap includes three phases: Helmet type by 2022, glasses type by 2025, and contact lens type by 2030-2040,"

said Kuo.

According to the analyst, these AR contact lenses are "unlikely to have independent computing power and storage." It's possible they would be connected to an owner's iPhone to get data.

In addition, Kuo said that Apple has several prototypes of its headset that weigh 200-300 grams but the final weight could be reduced to 100-200 grams if it can solve some technical problems.

This would make them significantly lighter than existing VR devices. Apple is reportedly working on

the most advanced and powerful chips for its unannounced VR headset, with some chips reportedly beating its own M1 Mac processors.

The iPhone maker may use a fabric exterior to reduce the headset weight, but the company is also using a fan - an unusual move for Apple given its emphasis on fan-less design.

The upcoming Apple VR headset will be similar to the Oculus Quest, and some prototypes being tested include external cameras to enable some AR features.

### Jammu & Kashmir Power Development Corporation Office Of The Executive Engineer Generation Division LJHP Gantamulla Baramulla

Email: xeneljhp@gmail.com

**EXTENSION NOTICE No. 02**

Due to poor response to this office E-NIT No. 25 of 2020-21 dated: 10.02.2021 issued vide this office No. GD/LJHP/2120-39 dated: 10.02.2021 for Procurement of Portable Testing Equipments like 5KV Megger DGA kit digital oil testing machine for 3x35MW LJHP. (Tender ID: 2021\_SPDC\_116239\_1), the critical dates are re-scheduled as under:

S.No	Activity	Date already tendered	Dates as per new schedule
1.	Date of Issue of tender notice	10-02-2021	10-02-2021
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents.	10-02-2021 to 08-03-2021	10-02-2021 to 15-03-2021
3.	Bid submission start date	10-02-2021	10-02-2021
4.	Bid submission end date	08-03-2021	15-03-2021
5.	Deadline for receiving the hard copies (CDR / EMD).	09-03-2021	16-03-2021
6.	Date & time of opening of Technical Bid (Online).	10-03-2021	17-03-2021

All the terms and conditions shall remain the same.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,  
Generation Division LJHP,  
Gantamulla Baramulla

NO: GD/LJHP/2556-60  
DATED: - 09.03.2021

**DIPK-NB-6315/20**

### Office of the Assistant Director Sheep Breeding Farm Hardushiva

**Short Term Tender Notice.**

Short term quotations affixed with Revenue Stamp of Rs 5/= are invited from the registered suppliers for supply of below mentioned Medicines & Surgical items (Superior quality) to Assistant Director Sheep Breeding Farm Hardushiva for the year 2020-21. The quotation should reach the office of U/sd within 04 days of the publication of this notice & shall be opened on same day at 04:00 pm in office chamber of the U/sd. The quotations or their representative are requested to be present on scheduled date & time. The rates should be per unit including GST. The U/sd reserves the right to reject any quotation or all quotations without assigning any reason thereof.

S.NO:	Name of medicine.
01.	Triclabendazole Liquid (1Ltr.)
02.	Ceftriaxone (injectable) (250mg)
03.	Ketoprofen (Injectable) (30ml)
04.	Nimoslid + Paracetmol (30ml)
05.	Atropine Injection (30ml)
06.	Multivitamin Injection
07.	Oxytetracycline Injection (30ml)
08.	Enrofloxacin (Injection) (30ml)
09.	Sulphadimidine (injection) (100ml)
10.	Dexona (eye drop)
11.	Surgical Set
12.	Flunixin Meglumine (Injectable) (30ml)
13.	Selenium & Vitamin E Supplement
14.	Dicyclomine Injection

Yours Sincerely,

Sd/-  
Assistant Director,  
Sheep Breeding Farm  
Hardushiva.

**DIPK-14831/20**

### Office Of The Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama Kmr

N.I.T SL. NO: 300 /R&B/Pul/2020-21/11294-11304  
DATED: 09/03/2021.

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of J&K U.T, the Executive Engineer R&B Division Pulwama invites Tenders affixed with Rs 5/ Revenue stamps along with earnest money in the shape of CDR for the following works from the Regd. Contractors in sealed envelope mentioning name and full address of the tenderer, Ref. NIT NO & Date and ref. to CDR NO & Date with amount prescribed on the envelope. The tenders be addressed to Executive Engineer PWD R&B Division Pulwama and should reach his office on or before 16-03-2021 -upto 4 pm.

The tender documents shall be issued on production of valid registration card and Treasury challan for Rs.200 up to 15-03-2021 4 pm.

S.NO	Name of work.	Approx Cost	Earnest Money	Class of Contractor	Time for Completion	Cost of T.D.	M.H. of Account
01.	Repairs/Renovation of Residential quarter at Munsif court Pampore. (Balance work) by way wooden Panelling/CGS sheets	0.99 Lacs	Rs. 2000/-	DEE	10 Days	Rs. 200/-	4059 (NFB) Judiciary

Executive Engineer,  
R&B Division Pulwama.

**DIPK-14838/20**

### The J&K Board Of Professional Entrance Examinations

Tel/Fax: 0194-2433590- , 2437647 (srinagar) : 0191-2479371, 2470102 (jammu) website: http://www. jakbopee.org. email: ceoiajkboppee@gmail.com

Subject: Conduct of Special Round of physical Counselling for Admission to B.Sc. Nursing/ B. Sc. Paramedical/ B.Sc. Technology Courses for academic session-2020.

Reference: i) F.No.1-6/Lt/2021-INC/12869 dated 26.02.2021 of Indian Nursing Council, New Delhi.  
ii) Notice No.029-BOPEE of 2021 dated 04.03.2021.

**Notification No: 034-BOPEE of 2021  
Dated: 08-03-2021.**

In pursuance to letter F.No.1-6/Lt/2021-INC/12869 dated 26.02.2021 read with Notice No.029- BOPEE of 2021 dated 04.03.2021 and consequent upon receipt of shortfall from the Government/ Private Institutions against Notification No. 028-BOPEE of 2021 dated 25.02.2021, it is notified that the Board shall conduct Special Round of physical Counselling of eligible candidates for Admission to B.Sc. Nursing/B.Sc. Paramedical / B.Sc. Technology Courses-2020. The candidates who are interested to participate in this round of counselling are advised to report at BOPEE Office, Srinagar/ Jammu between 9.00 AM to 10.00 AM, as per the following schedule :-

Dated	Rank	Remarks
15.03.2021	01 to 2000	Open Merit Candidates
16.03.2021	2001 to 3500	Open Merit Candidates
17.03.2021	3501 to 4300	Open Merit Candidates
18.03.2021	4301 to 5102	Open Merit Candidates

- Note:
- The candidate(s) who have been allotted seats during first round and have upgraded during second round of counselling shall not be eligible to participate in the counselling.
  - The candidates who have been allotted seat(s) during second round of counselling and have been upgraded during Mop-up round of counselling shall not be eligible to participate in this round of counselling.
  - The candidate(s) who have been allotted seat(s) during Mop-up round of counselling but failed to join in the allotted College/ Institution shall not be eligible to participate in this round of counselling.
  - The candidates once up-graded shall not be eligible to participate in this special round of counselling.
  - The candidates who have been allotted seat(s) during first/ second rounds of counselling but failed to join the College/ Institution due to one or the other reason are eligible to participate in this round of counselling.
  - The candidates who have missed to participate in any previous round of counselling (first, second and Mop-up round) of allotment / up-gradation counselling, shall be eligible to participate in this special round of counselling.
  - Only such candidates are eligible to participate in special round of counselling who have scored 25 or above points in the Entrance Test.
  - The counselling shall be closed immediately on exhausting of the available seats.
  - The seat matrix shall be uploaded on website of the Board in due course of time (www.ikboppee.gov.in).
  - The other terms and conditions shall remain the same as notified by the Board vide e-Information Brochure/ Notifications/ Notices issued from time to time on the subject.
  - This Notification is subject to outcome of any writ petition(s), if any pending, in any Court of Law

E&OE  
No: BOPEE /Exam-35(iii)/2020  
**DIPK-NB-6292/20**

Dated: 08-03-2021

(Dr Sunil Gupta)  
Controller Of Examinations  
J&K BOPEE

### J&K Handloom & Handicrafts Corporation

Residency Road, Emporium Building/Sanat Ghar, Bemina, Srinagar.

Camp office:-UdyogBhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu.  
e-mail: jkhckgae@hotmail.com

Srinagar Office Phone No:0194-2479825, 2486927 Fax No-2452376  
Jammu Office Phone No.0191-2477694 Fax No.2475705.

No: JKHC/HQ/2020-21/104

Date: 08/03/2021

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

J&K Handloom & Handicrafts Corporation intends to establish an Art Gallery at its Heritage Showroom, Residency Road, Srinagar for promoting the local handicraft & handloom sectors of J&K. The proposed gallery is not mere fixed space designed to house J&K Arts & Craft collections, but the purpose is to shape identity and memory, cultural heritage, distilled narratives and treasured stories. The Processes involved, the journey, experience, and story behind our art and craft sectors are all important to creating awareness for our creative products. For the said purpose, the Corporation is looking for engaging creative branding agency for conceptualizing, creating, designing and Printing of display in the shape of pictorial/Graphics/Text on the prescribed spaces/walls.

In this behalf, the Corporation invites conceptual and financial proposals from the interested agencies, with a strong track record of undertaking such project especially in Museum displays to participate in this tender. The agency will be responsible for creating an Art Gallery that works on several layers of creative display and entrepreneurial ideas like souvenirs and cafe etc. The interested bidders may visit the space for the ideas on display and other ideas.

For the service mentioned above scope of work, the Corporation is seeking a financial quote as total package of the assignment. In order to participate, agency should fulfill all the following conditions:-

- The bidder must possess the prior experience of executing similar assignments in the Museum/Gallery and technical know-how of Photography and production facilities and the financial wherewithal that would be required to successfully provide the services.
  - The Bidders should attach the copies of the relevant supporting documents like GST, PAN, ITR of last three years, Registration of Company for the above as proof for fulfilling the above conditions.
- The evaluation of the proposals would be carried out in two stages, the technical and financial. The final selection will be based on Quality cum Cost Based System wherein 70% weightage will be given to the technical score and 30% weightage to the financial score. The bidder with the highest score will be awarded the contract.
- The offers should reach in the office of Manager Marketing, J&K Handicrafts (S&E) Corporation, Residency Road, Srinagar by or before 15/03/2021 upto 2.00 PM and will be opened on the same day at 3.00 PM by the committee in presence of the tenderer/s who may wish to be present during the tender opening process. In case of reasons beyond the control of management or any other unfavorable circumstances the tenders will be opened on the next working day.
- The Managing Director reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender/s without assigning any reasons thereof. The EOI is also available at www.jkhsec.com

Sd/-  
Manager Headquarter

**DIPK-NB-6298/20**



## Farmer Unions Call Bharat Bandh On March 26 On Completion Of 4 Months Of Protest



**NEW DELHI:** Farmers' unions have called for a nationwide strike on March 26 when their ongoing protest at Delhi borders will complete four months, news agency PTI reported. Announcing their future programmes protesting the three agriculture laws enacted by Parliament in 2020, the farmers' unions said that some trade unions will also join them in their protest against fuel price hike on March 15.

Following Red Fort violence, which sullied the image of the so-far peaceful protest by the farmers, the farmers' unions are focussing more on spreading their message to other states through visits, mahapanchayats etc, instead of staying put only at Delhi borders. So farmers from Punjab, Uttar Pradesh are coming to Sin-

ghu, Tikri, Ghazipur protest sites, the union leaders are touring other states and some of those who have been at the sites since November-December are going back to take care of crops.

On February 26, the Confederation of All India Traders called a nationwide strike demanding a review of the provisions of the goods and services tax (GST) regime.

Recently, the farmers observed the 100th day of their ongoing protest and said the protests will go on unless the laws are repealed.

"If needed, we, on lakhs of tractors will reach Parliament to press for the repeal of the three black laws. 3,500 tractors entered Delhi on Republic Day. These were not hired tractors," Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait said in Madhya Pradesh.

## Job Postings Rise In February, Says Report

**MUMBAI:** Job postings went up in February, mainly led by hiring activities in FMCG, food and packaged goods sectors, according to a report.

Monster.com's Monster Employment Index showed that job postings witnessed a six per cent sequential growth in February.

The report revealed that most of the industries have shown growth with import/export (10 per cent), FMCG, food and packaged goods (9 per cent), and printing and packaging (9 per cent), BPO/ITES (7 per cent), banking/financial services and insurance (7 per cent) and garments/ textiles/ leather /gems and jewellery (7 per cent), witnessing significant increase in job postings in February as compared to January this year.

Whereas, engineering, cement, construction, iron/ steel declined by 3 per cent, home appliances 5 per cent, and retail 6 per cent.

In terms of year-on-year (y-o-y) growth, the overall index in February still showcases a significant drop of 15 per cent mainly on account of the impact of the pandemic across some of the key sectors.

Industries like travel and tourism witnessed a decline of 62 per cent in February as compared with the year-ago period, education by 42 per cent, oil/gas/petroleum, power 37 per cent, and BPO/ITES 36 per cent dragged the index down as they are still significantly down from pre-COVID levels.

However, agro-based industries witnessed an 11 per cent rise in hiring activities and telecom/ISP 10 per cent in terms of y-o-y comparison.

"While shifts in the job market have their ups and downs, with some sectors faring better than

others, segments such as IT and telecom, alongside agro-based industries and media and entertainment continue to do well. Travel and tourism still face their set of challenges.

However, it has seen improvement from where it was during the onset of the pandemic. With the COVID vaccine rollout being initiated and the nation gears up to be workplace-ready, we can hope for improvements and new opportunities to open up in the coming months," Monster.com CEO Sekhar Garisa said.

The Monster Employment Index is a broad and comprehensive monthly analysis of online job posting activity conducted by Monster India platform.

The report also revealed that there has been a growth in jobs in all the major cities across the country in February as compared to January this year.

Among the cities Ahmedabad (17 per cent), Bengaluru (10 per cent), Hyderabad (9 per cent) have shown the maximum growth while Delhi/NCR (6 per cent), Jaipur (5 per cent), Coimbatore (4 per cent), Chandigarh (4 per cent) have shown moderate growth.

On the basis of y-o-y comparison, the majority of the cities are still seeing a decline in job postings.

All functions and departments have shown positive growth in February compared to the previous month, while software, hardware, telecom (7 per cent), HR and admin (7 per cent), finance and accounts (7 per cent) have shown the maximum growth, hospitality and travel (2 per cent), purchase/logistics/supply chain (2 per cent) and legal (1 per cent) have shown moderate growth.

# Rainbow Trouts Rain Profits For Farmers In Kashmir

Mudassir Kuloo

**SRINAGAR:** Adil Ahmad is an assistant director of the fisheries department in the southern state of Karnataka. Recently, he travelled 3,000 kilometres to the north of India, to visit Asia's largest trout farm — the eight-hectare Kokernag fisheries farm in Jammu and Kashmir. Reason: To learn how rainbow trout, a highly profitable fish that can grow up to three kilograms (kg) in weight and which sells at Rs 500 a kg, is cultivated.

Rainbow trout is rich in protein and is said to boost immunity, another reason for its popularity. Trout farmers create artificial ponds on land to raise the fish.

"We were given training about breeding and feeding of trout. We are making efforts to introduce trout in Karnataka," Ahmad told Gaon Connection.

Besides such training, since the beginning of the year, the department of fisheries in Jammu and Kashmir has sent out several lakh eyed ova (developing eggs, each costing Rs two) of the much-prized rainbow trout, from Kokernag, about 80 kilometres from Srinagar. Rainbow trouts are predominantly blue, green, yellow and silver in colour, and glisten in various shades of the rainbow. Hence, the name.

Promoting trout farming in states

Recently, about 700,000 eyed ova have been sent to states such as Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim. Earlier, they were also sent to Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh and neighbouring Nepal. Lakhs of eyed ova have been distributed among local fish farms in the union territory, at a subsidy. Local fish farmers have been trained free of cost, Muzaffar Bazaaz, fisheries expert and chief project officer of the Kokernag farm, told Gaon Connection.

Trout farming is an important source of income for farmers in the Kashmir region. Trout need running water and temperatures ranging between 0 and 20 degree Celsius to thrive.

According to fisheries department figures, government and private farms produce 600 tonnes of trout annually in Kashmir, generating a revenue of more than Rs 13 crore (Rs 130 million). There are 581 private trout fish units in Kashmir and 200 more are being established in next few months under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, a scheme to boost fish production and generate employment opportunities.

"Various state governments purchase ova from us and supply it to their farmers who rear it in farms. The success rate is good, and this has inspired many states to take it up," Bazaaz said.

Trout story: from Scotland to Srinagar

More than a century ago, when it all began in December 1900, no one would have expected trout farming to get popular in the Valley. It is said the first consignment of 10,000 trout eggs came from Britain in 1899, but perished mid-way due to the long journey. The next year, they got lucky. A shipment of trout ova, including 1,800 fry, came in from Scotland on December 19, 1900, and reached in good shape. These were split between one



Mister Michel, who owned a private carpet factory in Baghi Dilarwar Khan, and Panzagam Dachigam (Harwan) (Dachigam National Park), about 24 km from Srinagar, says the website of the J&K fisheries department.

And thus, trout farming made a humble beginning in the Valley.

Farmer Shakeel Mohammad Teli, 55, from Sakhra Srigufwara in South Kashmir's Anantnag district established a fish farm in 2009 along with his brother and nephew on 30 marla (0.075 hectare) of land. The three of them get a share of over Rs 300,000 annually. Teli's nephew, who is a post-graduate in commerce, has taken up trout farming; his daughter, a post-graduate who also has a bachelor's degree in education is to run a trout farm too, instead of looking for a government job.

Good return on investment

What has triggered this interest in trout farming? The profits and the fact that trout grows well in cold regions.

Ova are spawned from high quality fish and placed in hatchery jars. It takes 12-15 months for the trout to grow over 250 grams. These are then ready for sale to trout farms, where they grow up to three kg before being sold in the market.

Last year, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Teli and his partners sold 1,400 kilograms of trout for Rs 700,000 — they made a profit of Rs 600,000 on an investment of Rs 100,000. "Rearing trout gives us better returns than crops we could have cultivated on this land. This sector has huge potential, and if one works with dedication, one can even trout provide employment to others," Teli said.

Bashir Ahmad, 36, another farmer from Kokernag, said his father established the family's trout farm in 2013 by constructing three reservoirs on 15 marla (0.037 hectare) of land. "We annually earn between five lakh and five-and-a-half lakh rupees from trout farming. I did not apply for a government job, and began helping my father. Those who have land and access to running water should start trout farming instead of cultivating other crops," he told Gaon Connection.

Ahmad looks after his parents, wife, younger sister and two daughters. "After completing my graduation, I worked as a salesperson, but it was difficult to make good money. For the past seven years, I am able to fulfil all necessities at home," he added.

Trout district of India

In Anantnag district, a lot of fish farms have been established with government support. In June 2018, Anantnag district was also declared as 'Trout district of India'. Shabir Ahmad Bhat, assistant director in the fisheries department, Anantnag, said there were 137 private fish farms just in Anantnag district. "This sector has huge potential and trout farming is also being introduced in other parts of India," he said.

Other than farms, trout is naturally found in the streams and nallahs of the valley, in places such as Lidder, Wangath, Gurez, Hamal, Lam and Bringi.

The Kokernag fisheries farm, set up in 1985 with support from the European Economic Committee, is supervised by Manzoor Ahmad. "We have to be careful while rearing trout. Unlike other species, trout need fresh running water and need to be fed on time," he said.

In a land of one kanal area (0.050 hectare), four fish ponds can be set up at a cost of around Rs 700,000. The union territory provides a 40 per cent subsidy for every pond set up on a trout farm. Anayitullah Chisti, a professor with the fisheries department of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology of Kashmir said fish culture has tremendous scope across the world. "The trout introduced in Kashmir is a cold water fish. It can be reared anywhere in the world provided the optimum temperature and running water needs are met. Trout has a good success rate in and outside India," he told Gaon Connection.

Brown trout can be found in rivers. However, rainbow trout raised in open water sources face threats, Bazaaz of the Kokernag farm, said. "The breeding of the rainbow trout is disturbed due to unabated mineral extraction and other activities. That is why we rear the rainbow trout in ponds, with a defined entry and exit of running water. It grows fast and is also resistant to disease. If the temperature remains between twelve and eighteen degrees Celsius for a year, a trout can grow up to three kilograms in a year," he added.

Bashir Ahmad Bhat, director of the fisheries department in J&K, said there were various schemes for farmers who want to start fish farms. "The government provides all possible support to those who are associated with this sector. We have no shortage of ova here," he told Gaon Connection.

en.gaonconnection.com

## 2400 PCBs Distributed Among Entrepreneurs And Mushroom Growers Of Sgr, B'gam

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Agriculture Kashmir on Wednesday distributed Pasteurised Compost Bags (PCBs) to the mushroom growers/entrepreneurs of district Srinagar and Budgam at Integrated Mushroom Development Centre (IMDC) Lalmandi, here.

On the occasion, the Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal said that the Department is working on a model aimed at generating additional income to the growers for which the Mushroom Sector is all set to increase productivity and enhance employment avenues.

He said IMDC Lalmandi is providing 2400 pasteurized compost bags and other inputs in the first phase besides this the department is committed to give all

sorts of technical guidance to the interested mushroom growers and entrepreneurs for setting up new mushroom units.

Director said Mushroom being an economically viable cottage industry; the Department is giving thrust for its sustainability and exploring avenues for market linkage.

Mushroom Specialist Zaffar Ahmad Hakeem, Spawn Production Officer Amarjeet Singh, Mushroom Research Officer Farzana Tabasum and other concerned officers were present on the occasion.

Earlier, the Director paid a surprise visit to District Shopian and held interaction with delegations of Pesticide/Fertilizer Dealers.

Later, he took a detailed review of the working of the district with the officers and officials.

## Telecom Companies Will Be Allowed To Instal Only Govt Approved Gears From June 15



Agencis

**NEW DELHI:** The government on Wednesday amended telecom licence norms that will enable it to control the installation of network equipment from non-trusted sources.

With effect from June 15, telecom operators will be required to take permission from the National Cyber Security Coordinator (NCSC) for up-gradation of existing networks, utilising the telecom equipment not designated as trusted products.

According to the license amendment, the NCSC will be the designated authority that can impose conditions for the procurement of telecom equipment on the grounds of "Defence of India" or matters directly related to national security.

"Designated authority shall notify the categories of equipment for which the security related to trusted sources are applicable. For the said categories of equipment the designated authority shall notify the trusted sources along with the associated telecommunication equipment (trusted products)," according to the amendment.

It will help the government control sourcing of products from China and other non-friendly countries.

The NCSC may also notify a list of designated sources from whom no procurement can be done.

"With effect from 15th June 2021, the licences, shall only connect trusted products in its network and also seek permission from the designated authority for up-gradation of an existing network utilising the telecommuni-

cation equipment not designated as trusted products.

"However, these directions will not affect ongoing annual maintenance contracts or updates to existing equipment already induced in the network as on date of effect," the amendment notification said.

While the government has not barred procurement of equipment from Chinese companies, it amended the general financial rules (GFR) 2017 to enable the imposition of restrictions on bidders in public procurement from countries that share a land border with India on grounds of defence of India, or matters directly or indirectly related thereto, including national security.

Public companies need to scrap tenders if a qualified bidder is from a country that shares a land border with India, which includes China.

J Sagar Associates partner Tony Verghese said that the amendment of the telecom licenses by the DoT regarding the procurement of telecom equipment was an expected move in light of the 5G auctions.

"The recent incidents allegedly by Chinese hackers have definitely hastened the process with the government inclined towards a new national strategy to strengthen the country's security.

"Telecom equipment's play a vital role in telecom connectivity and data transfer, which has a direct impact on the national security of India. Therefore, such a policy decision, which definitely impacts significant market players, clearly conveys the government's stand on national security," Verghese said.

## NEWSMAKERS

## Bengaluru Woman Alleges Zomato Delivery Man Hit Her, Shows Bloody Nose

Agencis

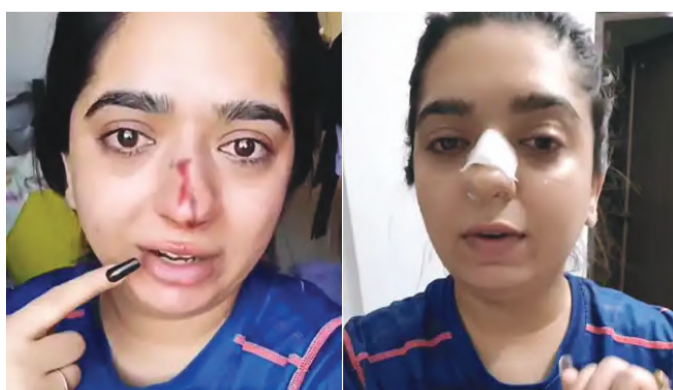
**BENGALURU:** A woman in Bengaluru has alleged a man delivering food for Zomato assaulted her inside her house over delay in bringing her order.

Hitesha Chandranee, a content creator, in videos shared on social media showed a bloody gash on her nose that she said was the result of the delivery executive hitting her.

The food-delivery app's official handle on Twitter responded to her video that a "local representative shall be in touch with you shortly to help you with the police investigation..."

Ms Chandranee, visibly shaking, said in the video, pointing to her bloody nose, "So guys my Zomato delivery order was late and I was talking to the customer care executive. And meanwhile the delivery person just did this. He hit me, left me bleeding here and ran off."

In another video, which she took later after she had bandaged her



nose, the Bengaluru resident said, "I ordered food from Zomato as I was working since morning. I ordered food around 3:30 pm, which was supposed to get delivered by 4:30 pm, and I did not get the order on time, so I was constantly following up with the Zomato customer care that either give me a free delivery for the same or just cancel the order..."

"And then the Zomato delivery guy came here. He was so rude... I didn't open the full door, I spoke to him from a gap in the door and told him am talking to the customer care... I told him I don't want the order since it was very late. But he refused to take the order and started screaming, 'bloody I am your slave or what... It felt so threatening, I got

scared and I tried to push the door. But he was so huge, he pushed back the door, snatched the order back from me and punched me. Then he ran away..." Ms Chandranee said in a nearly 4-minute-long video on her Instagram profile.

Zomato in a statement said the delivery partner has been delisted from the app. "We can't emphasise how sorry we are, rest assured we'll take necessary actions to prevent such incidents from happening in the future," Zomato tweeted.

"We deeply regret this incident and apologise to Hitesha for this traumatic experience. We are in touch with her and are providing our complete support through the necessary medical care and investigation. Meanwhile, we have delisted the delivery partner from our platform," Zomato said in the statement.

A case has been filed with Electronic City police station in Bengaluru and the delivery man has been arrested.

## PUBG creator invests \$22.4M in Indian firm Nodwin Gaming

Agencis

**NEW DELHI:** PUBG Mobile developer Krafton has invested \$22.4 million in the homegrown esports company Nodwin Gaming, the media reported on Tuesday.

According to TechCrunch, the aim is to "maintain some presence in what was once its key overseas market" after the ban on PUBG along with several other Chinese apps last year (although Krafton is a South Korea-based firm).

"With Krafton coming on board, we have an endorsement from the mecca of gaming and esports—South Korea—on what we are building in India for the world based on our competence in mobile first markets," Akshat Rathee, co-founder and managing director of Nodwin Gaming, said in a statement.

In a bid to re-enter the India market, PUBG Corporation in November said it is making a come-



back with the creation of an Indian subsidiary and a new game.

The immensely popular PUBG Mobile app was among the 118 Chinese apps that the Indian government banned in September over national security concerns.

To get the ban lifted, PUBG Corp made the decision to no longer authorise the PUBG Mobile franchise to China-based Tencent Games in India. The Indian subsidiary will hire over 100 employees specialising in business, esports, and game development, PUBG Corp had said.



## Real Kashmir FC Captain Mason Robertson's 4 Match Ban Revoked



Press Trust of India

**KOLKATA:** In a major relief for Real Kashmir FC, the All India Football Federation (AIFF) revoked the four-match suspension on its centre-back, Mason Robertson, on Wednesday. The decision allowed him to lead the side in the I-League playoff clash against TRAU FC at Kalyani Stadium on Wednesday.

In its decision, the AIFF appeals committee stated that the statement made by Mason "has to be judged on its terms and the same does not, taken by itself, amount to unsporting conduct within in the meaning of Article 50." It further stated that the alleged offence by the father-son duo cannot be clubbed together and should be judged separately.

"The Committee further holds that the player's action was a first-time infraction and in no way can be said to be severe enough to attract the provisions of Article 50.2(a) of the AIFF Disciplinary Code," it stated.

Mason, along with his father David Robertson (the head coach of the club), were on Saturday suspended for four matches and fined Rs 2 lakh each for abusing the referee in "filthy vulgar language"

during their I-League game against Indian Arrows on February 4.

The four-match ban would have forced the RKFC striker-cum-defender to sit out their remaining four playoff games.

Mason, in an appeal on Tuesday, had said the comment was "misconceived, contrary to law and cannot be sustained" and hence should be "revoked immediately".

The appeals committee also observed that the statement made by Mason "has to be judged on its terms and the same does not, taken by itself, amount to unsporting conduct within in the meaning of Article 50." It further stated that the alleged offence by the father-son duo cannot be clubbed together and should be judged separately.

"It is pertinent to note that there was a gap in time between the alleged statements of the appellant and the coach. Therefore, it may not be possible to ascribe them as a singular whole or as a concerted attempt to intimidate or offend the referee," it added.

VIJAY HAZARE SEMI-FINALS

## Mumbai Take On Karnataka, While Gujarat Face Uttar Pradesh

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** It will be a battle of the big-hitters when prodigiously talented openers Prithvi Shaw and Devdutt Padikkal square off against each other in a semifinal clash between domestic giants Mumbai and heavyweights Karnataka in the Vijay Hazare Trophy one-day championship here on Thursday.

While Padikkal, who smashed four consecutive List A hundreds to become the first Indian to achieve the feat, is the leading run-scorer of the tournament with 673 runs, Shaw is not far behind with 589 runs in his kitty.

Shaw, who will be leading Mumbai, has been on a record-breaking spree. The diminutive right-hand batsman became the highest individual scorer in the history of the tournament when he smashed an unbeaten 227 against Puducherry in the group stage match.

On Tuesday, he added another record to his name by notching up the highest score by an Indian in a chase in a List A game when he smashed an unbeaten 185 against Saurashtra in the quarterfinal, surpassing the likes of Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Virat Kohli.

Both youngsters would be keen to score big and push their teams into the final come Thursday.

Padikkal would like to impress the national selectors once again and push his case for a berth in the ODI squad for the upcoming three-match series against England.

Karnataka have an array of ex-

perienced players like Manish Pandey, pacers Ronit More, M Prasad Krishna, all-rounder Shreyas Gopal and spinner K Gowtham and could have a slight edge over Mumbai, who boasts of several youngsters and will be without the services of regular skipper Shreyas Iyer, prolific Suryakumar Yadav and pacer Shardul Thakur.

For Karnataka, another advantage is the form of skipper Ravikumar Samarth, who is second highest on the leading run-scorer list for this year, having amassed 605 runs. He hit a whirlwind 192 in the quarterfinal against Kerala and would be more than keen to put up a show once again. For Mumbai, who last won the tournament in 2018-19, a lot will also depend on how their bowlers led by medium pacer Dhaival Kulkarni (13 wickets) perform.

The role of spinners Shams Mulani, Prashant Solanki and Tanush Kotian and all-rounder Shivam Dube will also be equally important. The second semifinal between Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, to be played at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, can be touted as the battle of equals.

Both teams will rely on the performance of their skippers -- Priyank Panchal (Gujarat) and Karan Sharma (UP).

Line-up: Gujarat vs Uttar Pradesh match starts at 9am at the Arun Jaitley Stadium.

Mumbai vs Karnataka match starts at 9am at Air Force Ground, Palam.



## Bandipora Administration Felicitates 14 Participants Of 7th Thaiboxing Championship

Observer News Service

**BANDIPORA:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmad on Wednesday felicitated 14 players from Bandipora who participated in the recently held 7th Thaiboxing championship at Hyderabad.

Two players among them Muzaffar Ahmad Kawa from Kulhama Nadihal and Feroz Ahmad from Bagh Bandipora won the belts for the first time for the Union Territory while one participant Uzair Ahmad 8 years old was the youngest player among the participants of the UT.

The championship was organised by Thaiboxing Federation at Hyderabad, Telangana from 26 to 28 February, 2021.

While interacting with the players, the DC congratulated them for their participation in the championship and said that it will go a long way in motivating other youngsters to take interest in sports. He assured every possible support to youngsters for increasing sports activities in the district.

He urged them to spend their leisure time in sports activities so that they do not get indulged in any anti social activities like drug abuse.

He said the district administration is keen to develop sports infrastructure in the district and under different schemes, not only the play fields are being developed in every village but sports items are also distributed among the sports clubs of different villages besides numerous tournaments are organised under Khelo India.

He said the sports calendar for the upcoming summers has already been devised and soon the outdoor sports activities will start in the district. District Youth Services and Sports Officer, Ghulam Qadir was also present on the occasion.

## Bidyashagar Singh Hat-Trick Helps TRAU FC Trounce Real Kashmir 3-1

Agencies

**KALYANI:** Bidyashagar Singh continued his scoring spree and led TRAU to a thumping 3-1 win over Real Kashmir FC at the Kalyani Municipal Stadium in Kalyani, West Bengal. Bidyashagar had scored a hat-trick against Mohammedan SC as well in TRAU's last match and the nimble-footed forward continued his fine scoring form to inflict defeat on Real Kashmir, even after the Snow Leopards had pulled one goal back in the 24th minute.

Coming on the back of a thumping 4-0 win over Mohammedan SC, TRAU continued their fine attacking form against Real Kashmir FC as well. The Nandakumar-coached side could have taken the lead in less than five minutes in the match as chances by Komron Tursunov and Bidyashagar Singh were missed at close range. However, with attacking momentum heavily on their side, TRAU broke through the Real Kashmir FC defence in the 8th minute, but the Snow Leopards had only themselves to blame for conceding. A routine clearance was fluffed by Anuj Kumar and Bidyashagar Singh was there to capitalise on the error as he thumped home from close range.

The first real chance for Real Kashmir FC came in the 18th minute when Mason Robertson's shot was deflected for a corner kick after the Snow Leopards launched a counter-attack that almost reaped dividends for them. Despite playing catch-up for much of the first half to TRAU, the Snow Leopards scored their equaliser in the 24th minute when Danish Farooq head-



ed home from close range from a free-kick scenario, to make the scoreline read 1-1.

The attacking duo of Bidyashagar Singh and Komron Tursunov continued to trouble the Real Kashmir defence. And in the 37th minute, they combined to hand TRAU the lead once again. Bidyashagar Singh was played on goal by a Komron Tursunov pass and the nimble-footed forward slyly slotted the ball past an onrushing Anuj Kumar to make it 2-1.

Joseph Olaleye could have made it 3-1 for TRAU seconds before the half-time if he had not failed to find the net from hand-shaking distance, but as it stood TRAU led two goals to one at half-time.

After an electric first half where both teams had chances, the second turned into a cagey affair as both teams fought to gain attacking momentum by stitching passes. In the 54th minute, Real Kashmir tried to get the ball rolling through Lalrindika Ralte who tried to launch a bid to get the equaliser. Ralte's delivery into the box was

thwarted by TRAU's goalkeeper.

In the 60th minute, Phalguni Singh found Joseph Olaleye inside the box with a well-weighted through ball. With ample space, Olaleye's shot lacked the venom as it was hoofed away by the opposition defence. But perhaps the best chance of the half fell to Bidyashagar Singh in the 68th minute. The forward could have scored his hat-trick but his left-footed attempt from outside of the box went inches wide.

TRAU could have put the result to bed in the 79th minute when Joseph Olaleye's attacking run resulted in him finding substitute Chanso Horam inside the box. However, from an extremely tight angle, Horam's shot went inches wide of the goal.

Bidyashagar Singh sealed the deal for TRAU in the 85th minute when he bundled home from close range after Joseph Olaleye's shot from inside the box caused havoc, resulting in Bidya taking advantage of a loose ball and slot home. The full-time scoreline read 3-1 in TRAU's favour as they move to 22 points from 11 matches.

## Chinese Smartphone Company Vivo Back As IPL Title Sponsor

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Chinese smartphone company Vivo is back as the title sponsor of the Indian Premier League cricket tournament, almost a year after the sponsorship deal with the BCCI was suspended amid the India-China border standoff.

The company, which competes with players like Xiaomi and Samsung in the Indian market, also stated that it will expand its portfolio of premium devices, and focus on new technologies like 5G.

sponsor till 2023.

Dream11 had been the IPL title sponsor for the 2020 edition, winning the rights for Rs 222 crore. The matches were played in the UAE in view of the pandemic.

Marya cited research firm GfK's data to state that the company had highest market share in offline retail in three out of four quarters last year. As per the GfK report, Vivo held 27 per cent market share and clocked an annual growth of 10 per cent last year even when the industry shrank by 17 per cent in a



"Vivo is back as the title sponsor of IPL and that is very encouraging and exciting for us because IPL is the biggest property in India and is a perfect amalgamation of sports and entertainment, so we are looking forward to the 9th of April, when IPL begins," Vivo India Director Brand Strategy Nipun Marya told PTI on Wednesday.

He also said the temporary hold was a mutual decision, and the company and BCCI looked at the larger environment before deciding on putting the sponsorship on hold for a year.

"The whole environment has certainly now changed for the better and overall the environment is better. I think it's befitting that Vivo is back as the IPL title sponsor... Our old contract is as it is and we continue with all the terms and conditions we earlier had on the contract," Marya said.

This year's edition of IPL will run from April 9 to May 30 across six venues—Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi and Kolkata. The Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad will host the final on May 30 as well as the play-offs.

Vivo's sponsorship deal with the BCCI, worth Rs 440 crore per year, was suspended last season due to the India-China border standoff. Vivo had won the IPL title sponsorship rights for five years from 2018 to 2022 for a reported sum of Rs 2,190 crore. It will now be the title

pandemic-hit year.

He added that the company has a presence in more than 70,000 outlets and that the brand is doing well across geographies. Vivo will also add about 100 exclusive stores, taking the total number of such stores to 650 by the end of the year.

Marya said as per the GfK data of the December 2020 quarter, the market has grown by 5 per cent.

"So, I think that growth is coming back and that is why we are quite optimistic about the upcoming quarters and the year where we will be launching multiple new products. In fact, in the premium segment, we're looking at launching five to six new products," he said.

Apart from focussing on introducing devices with excellent imaging capabilities, he said the company will also focus on 5G and its portfolio of devices priced above Rs 20,000 will be 5G-enabled.

"There you will see a lot of action from our side and the way we have invested in 5G in the last so many years, Vivo take a strong position as far as launching products in 5G. We will be at the forefront of innovation, bringing latest product to the market when it comes to 5G," he said.

Vivo saw its revenue in India growing over 45 per cent to about Rs 25,060 crore in FY20 over the previous fiscal even as its losses widened significantly over the previous fiscal on account of higher total expenses.

## India Move To 2nd Spot In ICC T20I Team Rankings Ahead Of England Series

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** India climbed a spot to second in the latest ICC men's T20 International team rankings ahead of a five-match series against top-placed England beginning on March 12.

England are seven points ahead of India, who were third before the away series against Australia. Australia's 2-3 loss to New Zealand in a recent five-game series pushed the side below India with just one point separating the two. In the T20 batting chart, India batsman KL Rahul lost a place to be at the third spot but skipper Virat Kohli retained his sixth position.

With 816 points, Rahul is behind England's David Malan (915) and Australia's Aaron Finch (830), while Kohli was static at sixth with 697 points.

Finch jumped two places following his exploits in the last three

T20Is against New Zealand, where he scored 69, 79 and 36, while New Zealand's Martin Guptill gained three spots to be at the 8th position after his good show in the T20Is.

Guptill had scored 218 runs which included two half centuries during the T20 series against Australia.

Australia's Ashton Agar and New Zealand's Ish Sodhi made big gains after capturing 13 and 8 wickets in the recent series. Agar and Sodhi moved to the fourth and 8th positions respectively after climbing four and three places. Kiwi pacer Tim Southee and spinner Adam Zampa, however, lost three and one place respectively to be at the 9th and 6th place.

Left-arm Sri Lankan spinner Lakshan Sandakan, who took six wickets in the series against West Indies, broke into the top 10 at the 10th spot after gaining nine spots.

## ICC CEO Manu Sawhney Sent On 'Leave', May Resign Before Term Ends

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** The International Cricket Council's Chief Executive Manu Sawhney has been sent on "leave" after his conduct came under the scanner during an internal investigation by audit firm PricewaterhouseCoopers and may resign before his term ends.

It is understood that Sawhney, who replaced Dave Richardson after the ICC World Cup in 2019 for a tenure till 2022, hasn't also been on best of terms with some of the influential cricket boards with regards various policy decisions.

He has come under scrutiny for his allegedly "abrasive behaviour" with colleagues.

"There have been testimonies from multiple ICC staff about his 'abrasive behaviour' which hasn't been great for the morale of a very efficient group of employees," a senior official close to the ICC Board

told PTI on conditions of anonymity. The 56-year-old hasn't been attending office for some time and was asked to go on leave on Tuesday.

"The Board of Directors are trying to find a compromise formula where Sawhney leaves the post with dignity by tendering his resignation," the source said.

He has been under pressure since the election process for the new chairman was set in motion last year, which ended with Greg Barclay taking the position in November.

It is alleged that Sawhney's "authoritarian style of functioning" is far removed from the inclusive approach taken by Richardson and has not gone down well with the employees.

Also, a few cricket boards seem unhappy with him for backing interim chairman Imran Khawaja during the elections last year.

"He hasn't exactly been a favourite of a lot of cricket boards

during the past couple of years. Firstly, a lot of people didn't like his passive involvement when Greg Barclay of New Zealand and Imran Khawaja of Singapore were in contention to replace Shahshank Manohar," a senior BCCI source privy to developments in the ICC told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The second reason why some of the bigger boards are upset is his backing to the ICC's recent decision of asking boards to bid and pay a fee for hosting events during the next cycle.

It is understood that BCCI, England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and Cricket Australia are completely against the idea and have made their displeasure clear at the various board meetings.

Another reason is a proposal backed by him to have at least one ICC flagship event every year during the next eight-year cycle from 2023-

2031, which hasn't also got the vote of the 'Big Three'.

In case Sawhney chooses not to resign, it could lead to a long-drawn removal procedure by all-powerful Board of Directors.

"Manu also has support within the board which is now split into two factions of 9 and 8 members on each side. To remove Manu, one would need 12 out of the 17 votes, which is two third of the Board of Directors since he came with approval of majority of the board.

"It will be interesting if the faction comprising 'Big Three' can get 12 out of the 17 votes required to remove him," the source said.

Sawhney is the former CEO of Singapore Sports Hub and also served as Managing Director of ESPN Star Sports, a company he worked with for 17 years.

He is also a non-executive director and member of the Audit Committee of Manchester United Ltd.

Agencies

**TURIN:** Juventus and Cristiano Ronaldo crashed out of the Champions League round of 16 on away goals for the second successive year as the Bianconeri were eliminated by 10-man Porto.

Sergio Oliveira scored in extra time to send Porto into the quarter-finals of Europe's premier club competition despite a thrilling 3-2 loss in Turin after Federico Chiesa's two goals had given Juventus hope.

Porto, which played most of the second leg at a numerical disadvantage after Mehdi Taremi's sending off, advanced on away goals after the matchup ended 4-4 on aggregate.

"There's great disappointment and sadness, I'm pretty much speechless," Chiesa said.

"We managed to get back into the match and we deserved to go through. Instead, we're here talking about something else and I really

don't know what to say."

"We had all the cards in our hand to go through, just we didn't show it. We only performed in the second half today and we almost did it... the disappointment is so great. It's all pretty much meaningless, even my two goals or my performance, because we haven't got anything out of it."

Juventus went out in the round of 16 on away goals to Lyon last season.

Sergio Oliveira also netted Porto's first goal, from the penalty spot, but Chiesa scored twice in the second half to level the tie for Juventus and send the match into extra time.

Porto appeared to have all but won it before Adrien Rabiot reduced the deficit three minutes from time to set up a tense finale. Both sides also hit the woodwork in an end-to-end match in which the momentum kept changing. These games are marked in the history of the club," Porto coach Sérgio Conceição said.

"I have a group of brave players

who interpreted what we wanted in the best way, against a great team with players of a very high level.

"After Taremi's sending off, we showed the Porto DNA. We never stopped believing, this is the true DNA of Porto."

Juventus needed to overturn a 2-1 deficit from the first leg. It had conceded early in Portugal and almost did so again in Turin as Taremi's header bounced off the bar in the sixth minute after Bianconeri defender Leonardo Bonucci had blocked Zaidu Sanusi's effort.

Taremi was also involved in Porto's goal as he won the penalty when he was fouled by Merih Demiral and Sergio Oliveira converted into the bottom left corner.

Juventus appeared transformed after the break and drew level four minutes into the second half as Ronaldo controlled a Bonucci ball over the top and knocked it on for Chiesa to curl into the top right corner.

## Indian Army Adopting Robust Counter-Infiltration Strategy: Shripad Naik



Press Trust of India

The Indian Army has adopted a robust counter infiltration strategy, focusing on a mix of technology and human resources, to effectively check infiltration in border areas, the government said on Wednesday.

The measures to check infiltration include boosting surveillance architecture and intelligence gathering, Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik said in the Lok Sabha.

He was responding to a question on whether the Indian Army has taken any measures to reduce infiltration along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir.

Naik said the "innovative" deployment of troops, proactive use of surveillance and monitoring devices have enhanced the ability to detect and intercept terrorists attempting to infiltrate into India.

"The Indian Army has adopted a robust counter infiltration strategy which has an appropriate mix of technology and human resource put together to check infiltration effectively," the minister said.

"Innovative troops deployment, proactive use of surveillance and monitoring devices and the Anti-Infiltration Obstacle System

(AIOS) have enhanced the ability to detect and intercept terrorists attempting to infiltrate/exfiltrate," he said in a written reply.

On the basis of regular analysis of threat assessment and past infiltration attempts, drill and procedures are being modified to counter emerging threats, Naik said.

"Some of the measures employed by the Indian Army to check infiltration included augmentation of AIOS with surveillance assets and enhanced incorporation of aerial platforms, night vision equipment, radars and underground sensors etc," he added.

Naik said maintenance of heightened alert in areas along the LoC is also part of the measures.

To a separate question, he said work is being carried out on some disruptive technologies as part of the strategy towards improving war-fighting capabilities of the armed forces.

"Induction of these technologies would be undertaken at an appropriate stage of development as per the existing procurement laid down in Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) 2020," he noted.

The minister said special measures are in place to control and prevent the trickle down of the disruptive technology to non-state actors.

## Mamata Banerjee Injured During Campaign In Nandigram, Alleges 'Conspiracy'



Press Trust of India

NANDIGRAM: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said on Wednesday that she was injured in one of her legs after being allegedly pushed during the election campaign in Nandigram.

The incident happened in the evening when Banerjee was outside a temple in the Reyapara area. "I was standing outside my car with the door open. I was going to a temple there to offer my prayers. Few people came around my car and pushed the door. The door hit my leg," she said.

BJP leader Arjun Singh said Mamata Banerjee was lying to get sympathy. The chief minister claimed that her leg got swollen because of the injury and she was feeling feverish. Speaking to reporters, she said no local police personnel was present at the spot when the incident happened.

Banerjee, the TMC candidate from Nandigram, alleged that it was a "conspiracy".

The incident triggered a security scare as the chief minister gets Z-plus protection.

Banerjee, who was supposed to stay the night in Nandigram, was being brought to Kolkata, official sources said.

She was in the area in Purba Medinipur district over the last two days to campaign for the upcoming elections. Earlier, in the day she filed her nominations in Haldia.

**I WAS STANDING OUTSIDE MY CAR** with the door open. I was going to a temple there to offer my prayers. Few people came around my car and pushed the door. The door hit my leg."

## Rahul Questions Alleged Delay And Pendency Of CAG Reports



Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday raised question over alleged delay and pendency of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports, tweeting the word "CAGed" along with a table showing the time taken by it for audit in the last few years to support his claim.

Taking to Twitter, he posted a table which showed the time taken by the CAG to prepare audit reports since 2011-12.

The table shared by Gandhi showed that in the fiscal years 2017-18 and 2018-19, the CAG reports for which dates could be ascertained were either finalised within 12-18 months and 18-24 months after the

fiscal year, or they were pending. "CAGed", Gandhi tweeted along with the table.

While Gandhi did not mention the source of the table shared by him, a media report claimed that the number of reports brought out by the country's top audit body has come down sharply in the past five years.

The total number of CAG reports relating to central government ministries and departments came down from 55 in 2015 to just 14 in 2020, a fall of nearly 75 per cent, the report said citing a reply to an RTI application.

In another tweet in Hindi, Gandhi attacked the central government over the ongoing farmers' protest and demanded a repeal of the new farm laws.

## Farmer Unions Call For Bharat Bandh On March 26



Farmers block a road at Singhu border during their 'chakka jam' protest on Feb 6. File Photo

Agenceis

Farmer unions on Wednesday called for a Bharat bandh on March 26, when their protest at Delhi's borders against the Centre's three new farm laws completes four months.

Farmer leader Buta Singh Burjgill said farmers along with trade unions will protest the hike in fuel prices and privatisation of railways on March 15.

"We will observe a complete Bharat bandh on March 26, when our protest against the three farm laws completes four months. The

peaceful bandh will remain effective from morning till evening," he told reporters at the Singhu border.

On March 19, the farmers will observe "Mandi Bachao-Kheti Bachao" day, he said.

The farmer unions have also decided to celebrate Shaheedi divas' of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev, Burjgill added. Farmers leaders also said that copies of the new farm laws will be burnt during Holika Dahan' on March 28.

Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping

at the Delhi border points --- Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur --- for over four months, demanding the repeal of farm laws and a legal guarantee on the minimum support price (MSP) for their crops.

The protesting farmers have expressed apprehension that these laws would pave the way for the dismantling of the MSP system, leaving them at the "mercy" of big corporations. However, the government has maintained that the new laws will bring better opportunities to farmers and introduce new technologies in agriculture.

## Have You Seen The Movie 'Titanic', Mumabi HC On Plea Seeking Vaccine On Priority For Judiciary

Agenceis

The Bombay High Court, on Wednesday, adjourned the hearing on a PIL seeking COVID-19 vaccination for lawyers and judges on priority, saying some decisions must be left to the "executive's wisdom".

The court also said it was rather "selfish" of the petitioners to seek vaccination on priority for the judiciary.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G.S. Kulkarni was hearing a plea filed by Mumbai-based lawyers, seeking that members of the judiciary, advocates and their staff be considered as frontline workers and they be provided vaccine against COVID-19 on a priority basis.

The petitioners, advocates Vaishnavi Gholave and Yogesh Morbale, filed the plea last week through their counsels Vinod P. Sangvikar and Yashodeep Deshmukh.

The petitioner lawyers told the bench on Wednesday that the HC worked throughout the pandemic period and all lawyers, judges, and staff continued to work, regardless of the risk of contracting the viral infection.

The bench however, reminded the petitioners that many others, such as sanitation workers and staff of several private organisations, also continued to work in this period.

"Why not file a PIL for the staff of private organisations, dab-bawalas? That way everyone is a frontline worker," the bench said.

"Something should be left for the executive's wisdom. Tell us what is wrong with the policy? A policy decision cannot be interfered with by the court unless there is arbitrariness," it said.

The bench also said the government was doing a fine job with the ongoing vaccination programme in the country.

The court said it was rather "selfish" of the petitioners to seek vaccination on priority for the judiciary.

"Have you seen the movie 'Titanic'? Do you recollect captain of ship? He has to wait till others are

evacuated. First everyone gets it and then judiciary. I am the captain here," Chief Justice Datta said.

The Union government's counsel Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Anil Singh told the HC that similar matters were pending in various other high courts across the country.

He also said the Delhi High Court had taken suo moto (on its own) cognisance of the vaccination drive.

Singh also said the Bharat Biotech, which has developed the COVID-19 vaccine 'Covaxin', had filed an application before the Supreme Court for transferring all the applications to the apex court.



The HC then said it will refrain from making any observations on the policy decision till the Supreme Court decides on the transfer plea.

The court also said if and when the government decides to vaccinate members of the judiciary, the ASG and other lawyers must suggest that lawyers working under the legal services authority are considered first.

It directed the ASG to clarify by March 17, the next date of hearing, what were the requirements to prove one's co-morbidities and become eligible for receiving the vaccine.

Currently, vaccination is underway in India for medical staff, those classified by the government as frontline workers, and for citizens above 60 years of age or those in the age group of 45 and 59 with co-morbidities.

## Afghan Buddha In Virtual Return, 20 Years After Taliban Destroyed

Agenceis

Twenty years after being blasted out of Afghanistan's rugged central highlands, one of the country's famed Buddha statues made a brief virtual return on Tuesday night as a three-dimensional projection filled the alcove that hosted the statue for centuries.

The projection topped off a day commemorating the destruction of the two famous Buddha statues by the Taliban in March 2001 in central Afghanistan's Bamiyan valley.

"We do not want people to forget what a horrific crime was committed here," said Zahra Husaini, one of the organisers of the A Night With Buddha event.

After a lantern-lit procession, hundreds gathered at the base of the cliff where the statues once stood alongside a network of ancient caves, monasteries and shrines.

The projection filled the alcove

that once housed Salsal - the 55-metre (180-foot) high statue.

"These moments also remind you of what a great treasure we lost," said Gulsoom Zahra, a 23-year-old Bamiyan resident who attended the ceremony.

The Taliban drew international revulsion when they blew up the centuries-old figures during their brief, iron-handed rule over the country as they went on a rampage against Afghanistan's rich pre-Islamic cultural heritage.

With its snowy backdrop and clear blue skies, Bamiyan has been one of Afghanistan's few popular destinations for outdoor enthusiasts and history buffs keen to explore the country's archaeological heritage.

The commemoration has been clouded by fears the Taliban are on the verge of returning to power after signing a landmark deal with the United States that could see international troops exit the country in coming months.

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