



P3 CITY

SDA'S SANGARMAL SHOPPING COMPLEX RUNNING INTO LOSSES

No business and establishment at Sangarmal shopping complex in Srinagar has a lease agreement—contrary to it the space holders owe a whopping amount of more....

P7 THINK

LOSE THE VIRUS, KEEP THE MASK

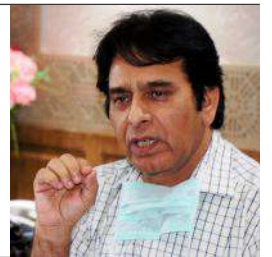
I grew up in South Korea, where mask-wearing was an accepted norm. Individuals would don face coverings for a myriad of reasons: when they were feeling sick; when they didn't have enough time to put on makeup; when the air was so cold it....



P5 STATE

SAME COVID STRAIN IN KASHMIR AS EXISTED LAST YEAR: DIRECTOR SKIMS

Director Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura Dr. A G Ahanger Tuesday said that Covid samples from Kashmir are being sent to New Delhi and...



You can never plan the future by the past.

—Edmund Burke

CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Centre Rules Out Nationwide Lockdown For Now

PM Calls For Combined Efforts To Combat Second Wave

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The country is again faced with a big battle against COVID-19 and conditions will improve with the decisions taken in recent days, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday and stressed that lockdown should be the last option.

In his address to the nation, Modi said the people were undergoing suffering but "we need to fight it out with all our might" and expressed confidence that the coronavirus will be defeated with the combined efforts of the people.

"I want to thank our doctors and all our healthcare workers



for working non-stop in this fight against COVID-19 pandemic," he said.

Modi noted that pharma sector was working relentlessly to meet all COVID-19 challenges,

including on vaccine development and supply.

The prime minister said that the shortage of oxygen cylinders has come across as a major problem. **● More On P10**

Corona Surge Cause Of Concern: Pole



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The sudden spike in coronavirus cases in Kashmir is a cause of concern but the

situation does not warrant imposition of a lockdown yet, a senior official said on Tuesday.

Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir, **● More On P10**

Next 3 Weeks Crucial In Corona Fight: GoI

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Tuesday advised union territories to ramp up testing for COVID-19 and augment laboratory and hospital infrastructure to prepare for the next three weeks keeping in view the critical situation.

These were conveyed to top officials of the union territories at a review meeting by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla and **● More On P10**

J&K Logs Highest Single-Day Spike Of 2,030 Cases

8 More Deaths Push Fatality Count To 2071

KO Web Desk

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir recorded its highest single-day spike of 2,030 COVID-19 cases on Tuesday, which includes 352 travellers, taking the infection tally in the union territory past 1.50 lakh, officials said here.

They said eight more fatalities were registered in a span of 24 hours, pushing the death toll to 2,071.

Of the fresh cases, 944 are from Jammu division and 1,086 from Kashmir division, the officials said, adding that the union territory's total caseload now stands at 1,50,238.

They said Srinagar district recorded the highest number of 647 new cases, including 58 travellers, followed by 501 in Jammu district and 143 in Reasi.

The number of active cases of the disease **● More On P10**

Night Curfew Extended Across J&K

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday extended the ongoing night curfew to all municipal and urban local body limits in view of the spike in COVID-19 cases. The order **● More On P10**

J&K Has Adequate Oxygen Available: Govt

Asserting that the entire government machinery was all set to combat the serious challenge caused by second wave of Covid-19 pandemic, the Jammu and Kashmir administration said on Tuesday that adequate buffer stock of oxygen cylinders was available and not a single patient shall die for want of oxygen in the Union Territory. The assurances about **● More On P10**

World Press Freedom Index

India Ranks Low At 142

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India has ranked 142nd out of 180 countries on a global press freedom index in the annual Reporters Without Borders analysis released on Tuesday.

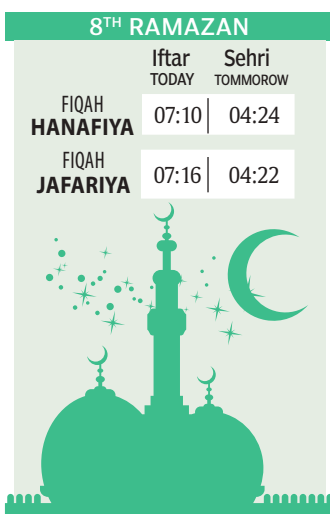
A report by Reporters Without Borders says there has been a dramatic deterioration of press freedom since the onset of the pandemic. The report said that countries have used the pandemic to limit journalist's access to information, sources and reporting in the field.

There has been a particular increase in these incidents in Asian, Middle East and European nations. India, ranked 142 of the 180 polled nations, remains one of the most dangerous nations for journalists. Nepal is ranked at 106, Sri Lanka at 127, Pakistan at 145 and Bangladesh at 152. Overall, in 2021, just 7 per cent, of the index's 180 countries offered a favourable environment for journalism.

The tops ranking countries include Finland at 2, Sweden at 3, Denmark at 4, the Netherlands at 6, Portugal at 9, Belgium at 11, Ireland at 12 and Germany at 13.

In India, the report reads, critical journalists are labelled 'anti-state' or 'anti-national' by BJP supporters. In 2020, four journalists were killed in connection with their work. Journalists in India have also been subjected to physical attacks by BJP activists, often with the complicity of the police.

Adding to the **● More On P10**



NEWS DIGEST

LG Greets People On Ram Navami

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday extended his warm greetings to the people on the eve of Ram Navami. In his message, the Lt Governor observed that "Lord Ram, the seventh incarnation of Lord Vishnu is an embodiment of compassion, dutifulness, tolerance, Justice, and great virtues". People, especially the youth, must **● More On P10**

Labourer Dies After Quarry Accident

SRINAGAR: A middle-aged labourer on Tuesday died after an accident at a stone quarry in Bandipora district of north Kashmir. 58-year-old Abdul Rashid Rather sustained critical injuries after falling from a stone-quarry in Bandipora district on Tuesday afternoon, reports said. He was removed to the Srinagar's SMHS hospital for treatment. **● More On P10**

20 Coaching Centres Sealed In Kupwara

SRINAGAR: Authorities sealed at least twenty coaching centres in north Kashmir's Kupwara district for violating Covid-19 guidelines amid a rampant surge in positive cases.

An official said that the coaching centres were sealed by a team led by Naib-Tehsildar Sogam on the directions passed by SDM Lolab Aijaz Ahmad. "The closed down institutes were found in **● More On P10**

Eight Arrested For Cattle Smuggling

JAMMU: Eight suspected cattle smugglers were arrested and 94 bovines rescued as police foiled a smuggling bid in the outskirts Jammu on Tuesday, officials said.

A police team intercepted eight trucks headed for Kashmir on the highway near the Ban toll plaza and rescued the animals during a search of the vehicles, they said. Those arrested were **● More On P10**

Pak Returns Kashmiri Teen To Authorities

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Pakistan Army on Tuesday handed over to the Indian authorities an 18-year-old youth who had inadvertently crossed the Line of Control into Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) last year.

Mohammad Sayeed Mohiuddin was handed over to the Indian authorities at Titwal crossing point in Tangdhar sector along the LoC, a defence spokesman said here.

"Inadvertent crossings across the Line of Control by locals on either sides of it have been an occurrence due to rugged terrain. In one such crossing...Mohammad Sayeed Mohinuddin belonging to Gurez in forward areas of Bandipora crossed into forward areas of Pakistan controlled Kashmir in September last year," the spokesman said.

He said the proactive coordination by the Indian authorities has enabled repatriation of the youth.

The spokesman said interactions with the locals of Titwal revealed that there has been a marked decrease in the inadvertent crossings over a period of time due to strict vigil along the Line of Control.

Another Wet Spell In J&K from Today

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Mercury plunged by a few notches in Kashmir valley ahead of the weather department's forecast of more rains in plains and fresh snowfall on higher reaches, including the famous skiing resort of Gulmarg.

"Scattered to widespread rain/thunderstorm and snowfall over higher reaches like Gulmarg, Zojila, and on higher reaches of Leh-Manali Highway is likely during April 21-22. Thereafter, mainly dry weather is expected till ending April," Director Meteorological Department, Sonam Lotus said.

Meanwhile, a meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 7.2 degree Celsius against 7.6 degree Celsius on the previous



File Photo: Abid Bhat

night. It was 0.7 degree Celsius below normal in the summer capital of J&K.

Qazigund, the gateway town of Kashmir, saw a low of 4.9°C against previous night's 7.4°C,

the official said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of 1.4 degree Celsius same as on the previous night which was 2 degree Celsius below normal, he said. The **● More On P10**

LANDSLIDE BLOCKS HIGHWAY

The traffic on 270-km Srinagar-Jammu highway on Tuesday was suspended after a landslide hit the vital road link in Ramban District. The landslide occurred near Cafeteria Morh in Ramban on Tuesday morning prompting the officials to suspend traffic movement on the highway, reports said. The Beacon authorities, reports said, pressed into service its men and machinery to clear the highway from debris and make it motorable for traffic. The closure of the highway, **● More On P10**

76% Students Qualify Class 11th Exams



Agencies

SRINAGAR: As many as 76 percent students passed annual examinations of 11th standard in Kashmir division, the results of which were announced on Tuesday by the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (BOSE) on Tuesday.

According to the reports, girl students outshined boys and registered a pass percentage of 79 compared to 74 percent secured by boys. BOSE also said that a total of 75,652 students were enrolled for the exams out of which 57,658 qualified it.

According to BOSE, at least 25,701 students bagged the distinction in the annual regular exams of 11th standard. **● More On P10**

Meet Zarka, 'Made in Kashmir' Detergent's Brandmaker

Augib Javed

This former teacher still carries her classroom coach characteristics when she arrives in her factory—which braved successive lockdowns—to produce local detergent brand in the market.

A mother of two children, Zarka Tanzeel, 29, is only living up to her 'empowered

woman' image, with which she wants to inspire her 'brown-beaten tribe'.

"I always wanted to lead by an example," Zarka says in her workstation in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

"And as a job creator in the field previously thought as challenging for women, I want to help

my type to become their own support in life."

An employer of a dozen workforce including two women, Zarka is believed to be the first woman who introduced Kashmir's own detergent powder in the local market filled to the brim with

non-local brands.

In Budgam, her detergent factory produces a native brand called "KMR Sheen" detergent powder.

Before starting her own venture, Zarka had to pass through her own share of struggles in life. A native of Srinagar's Bemina area, Zarka pursued her dream rigorously after her wedding.

In 2017, this former private **● More On P10**





To place an advertisement
CALL +91-194 2502327
Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm)
No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

Wednesday| 21.04.2021

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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از نیابت چندوسه
عنوان: مضعون درخواست فریده بیگم و پروید احمد و روحید احمد و گلفیت بانو و نوید احمد
و ساحلہ پرویدہ ساکنہ چندوسہ برادر عطا یگی PSC-رئفیکیت تحت SRO294
استہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
معاہلہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست برادر PSC
سرفیکیت پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس ضمن میں پٹواری
حالتہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سال پہاڑی بولنے
والے طبقے سے تعلق رکھتا ہے کہہ بذیل افتراڈ پر مشتمل ہے
مزدوری 45 سال
فریدہ بیگم گھریلو کام 40
گلفیت بانو گھریلو کام 24
روحید احمد خان مزدوری 21
نادیہ بانو گھریلو کام 19
ساحلہ پرویدہ زیر تعلیم 18
نوشبو پرویدہ زیر تعلیم 14
صفاء پرویدہ زیر تعلیم 11
اسکے علاوہ عہد کی مہانت آمدنی زریع و غیر زریع 14000 ہے
سرفیکیت زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا انکشاف کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض
ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہیمل کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے
بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
تاعب تحصیلدار aj

از نیابت چندوسه
عنوان: مضعون درخواست محمد یوسف خان ولد شیر احمد خان ساکنہ نیلمسہ برادر
عطا یگی PSC-رئفیکیت تحت SRO294
استہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام
معاہلہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں ساکن نے ایک درخواست برادر PSC
سرفیکیت پیش کی ہے۔ جو کہ فتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے اس ضمن میں پٹواری
حالتہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سال پہاڑی بولنے
والے طبقے سے تعلق رکھتا ہے کہہ بذیل افتراڈ پر مشتمل ہے
مزدوری 67 سال
فریدہ بیگم گھریلو کام 62
گلفیت بانو گھریلو کام 32
روحید احمد خان مزدوری 28
نادیہ بانو گھریلو کام 26
ساحلہ پرویدہ زیر تعلیم 24
نوشبو پرویدہ زیر تعلیم 22
صفاء پرویدہ زیر تعلیم 22
اسکے علاوہ عہد کی مہانت آمدنی زریع و غیر زریع 15000 ہے
سرفیکیت زیر بحث ادا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا انکشاف کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض
ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض ساتھ ہیمل کے اندر پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے کے
بعد کوئی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
تاعب تحصیلدار ajz

Public Notice

I have lost my 4th Semester Marksheet Of B.E Mechanical bearing Roll No: 14204135066, Regd No: 3165-SME-2014. 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 University Of Kashmir within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Randeep Singh
S/O Harbhajan Singh

The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education New Campus Bemina Srinagar

Attention Please
Notice for General Public

The applicant/ candidate whose photograph is published in this notice and claiming to have lost her qualification certificate Havign the following description:-
Roll No:- 354204
Class :- 10th
Year & Session : 2010 Annual Regular
Registration No:- NO9441670005
Name:- Aakash Bashir Dar
Father's Name Bashir Ahmad Dar
Mother's Name Sayida Begum
DOB 05-04-1996
R/o Nowpora Tujar Sopore



Now the candidate has approach to this office for issuance of Duplicate Qualification Certificate , so before the same is processed and provided to the candidate, under rules, anybody having any objection in this regard, shall bring into the notice of Assistant Secretary of Certificate as well as Assistant Secretary Examination Unit I & III KD within the period of 7 days respectively, from the date of publication of this notice.
(Besides the above referred "Qualification / Marks Certificate/s" bearing serial no; KMARIO-4012228 be treated as "CANCELLED")

No: F(Cer is-I-DQC)B/KD/21
Dated 20-04-2021 Gul Assistant Secretary
Certificates, KD.

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

NOTICE



Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Mohammad Younis Malik S/O Ghulam Mohammad Khan R/O Ghalibabad Shalteeng (Transferor) of Baleno

bearing registration No. JK01AG-3020 chasis No: 423610 Engine No: 196067 Model 2018 in favour of Peer Mohammad Afaq Chisti S/o Peer Mohamamd Yousuf Chisti R/o Mandibail Nowshehra Srinagar (Transferee).

Now, therefore, it is notified for the information of the general, public that representation/ Objection, if any in connection with proposed transfer will be received within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer to the address of undersigned.

No, representation/ objection shall be considered unless it is made writing it is made in the aforesaid period.

NOJK-RTOK 1082
Dated: 20/04/2021 Regional Transport Office, Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

NOTICE



Whereas, a joint application has been received from Shri Sajad Ahmad MIR s/O Abdul Aziz Mir R/o Shah Mohalla Nawabazar Sgr (Transferor) and Shri Fayaz Ahmad Shah S/o Ali Mohammad Shah R/o

Safa Kadal (Transferee) for transfer of Maxi Cab carriage route Permit No 6951/MC Covering Vehicle No JK01Q-8503.

Now, therefore, it is notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit / vehicle shall be filed in writing in the office of the Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir.

Within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily News Paper Kashmir Observer.

Seller and purchaser identified by the authorized representatives of M/S New J&K Road Way namely Mohammad Yaseen

NO: JK/RTOK /1078
Dated: 20/04/2021 Regional Transport Office, Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DEPARTMENT, DIVISION,AWANTIPORA

email : pheadivisionawantipora@gmail.com

TENDER DOCUMENT

(Technical Bid-Volume-I)

TOP SHEET

E-NIT S.No. 05/PHA of 2021-22

E- TENDER FOR

S. No	Name of Work
01	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including laying, fitting, successful testing & commissioning of 150 mm dia D.I pipes from intake upto S.R and Construction of 0.40 Lac Glns capacity RCC S.R & Intake Chamber/Spring Protection works of Water Supply Scheme Shariefabad Noorabad (under JMM) including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.
02	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Construction of 0.60 Lac gallons capacity Slow Sand Filtration Plant, 0.20 Lac gallons capacity Service Reservoir & Chain Link Fencing of Water Supply Scheme Doodimgarg (under JMM) including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.
03	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Revamping of SSFP, S.R. & Intake Chambers at Lam & Gutengoo of Water Supply Scheme Lam Aripal (under JMM), including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.
04	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Providing/Fabrication of Steel Truss to existing Quarter, Construction of Toilet Block & Electrical/Mechanical works of Water Supply Scheme Pahaldachan (under JMM), including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.
05	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Construction of Intake Chamber of Water Supply Scheme Noorpora Old (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.
06	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Construction of Toilet Block & Electrical Mechanical Works of Water Supply Scheme Khenibugh (under JMM), including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.
07	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC of Water Supply Scheme Hajinnard Hamidabad (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.

The Bidding documents consisting of eligibility criteria, specification, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) set of terms & conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the e-procurement Portal "<http://jktenders.gov.in>" as per schedule of dates given below:-

S. No.	Description	Date			Time
		DD	MM	YYYY	
1	Publishing date of NIT	20	04	2021	09:00 AM
2	Download start date	20	04	2021	09:00 AM
3	Bid submission start date	20	04	2021	09:00 AM
4	Bid submission end date	05	05	2021	4:00 PM
5	Bid opening date (Technical Cover)	06	05	2021	11:00 AM

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

Notice Inviting e-Tender

E-NIT S.No. 05/PHA of 2021-22

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor UT of J&K e-tenders (Two cover System) on Item Rate Basis including the maintenance cost for a period of Three Years which includes 12 months of DLP are invited from Reputed and resourceful contractors/ Firms/Companies/Joint Venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments for the following works, which should be uploaded on the Procurement web portal <http://jktenders.gov.in> for the subjected work(s) referred below to be received by the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Division Awantipora and as per the details mentioned in this e-tender notification and to whom all the terms and conditions of detailed e-NIT /Tender Documents/ PWD Form No:- 25 double are accepted. The detailed tender document and Specifications etc. can be downloaded on the e-procurement portal <http://jktenders.gov.in>. The cost of tender documents (Non-refundable/Non-Transferable) should be in the shape of e-Challan or Treasury Challan/Receipt in favour Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Department, Division Awantipora.

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (in lacs)	Cost of TD (in)	Time of completion	Class of Contract
01	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including laying, fitting, successful testing & commissioning of 150 mm dia D.I pipes from intake upto S.R and Construction of 0.40 Lac Glns capacity RCC S.R & Intake Chamber/Spring Protection works of Water Supply Scheme Shariefabad Noorabad (under JMM) including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	126.910	2600	90 DAYS	AYY
02	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Construction of 0.60 Lac gallons capacity Slow Sand Filtration Plant, 0.20 Lac gallons capacity Service Reservoir & Chain Link Fencing of Water Supply Scheme Doodimgarg (under JMM) including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	101.111	2600	90 DAYS	AYY
03	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Revamping of SSFP, S.R. & Intake Chambers at Lam & Gutengoo of Water Supply Scheme Lam Aripal (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	97.703	1600	90 DAYS	AYY
04	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Providing/Fabrication of Steel Truss to existing Quarter, Construction of Toilet Block & Electrical/Mechanical works of Water Supply Scheme Pahaldachan (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	38.228	1100	60 DAYS	AAY
05	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Construction of Intake Chamber of Water Supply Scheme Noorpora Old (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	37.233	1100	60 DAYS	AAY
06	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC including Construction of Toilet Block & Electrical Mechanical Works of Water Supply Scheme Khenibugh (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	36.932	1100	60 DAYS	AAY
07	Providing water supply facilities for the coverage of FHTC of Water Supply Scheme Hajinnard Hamidabad (under JMM). including maintenance for a period of three years which includes 12 months DLP.	28.456	1100	60 DAYS	AAY

Position of Funds:- Available;
Major Head of Account: Jal Jeevan Mission (JMM)
Position of AAA:- Accorded

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Bidders in their own interest are advised to go through and refer to Jal Jeevan Mission (JMM) Guidelines which are available on the website of Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, as no deviation in any form shall be admissible from the stipulated guidelines and the payment shall be subject to fulfillment of all the conditions set forth in the stated guidelines as per scheduled of payments forming part of this e-nit as under:-
 - Advanced Payment against Procurement/Supply of Pipe
 - 40 % of the item rate for the item providing and laying of the pipe shall be paid to the contractor against the supply of the pipes at site on providing original invoice from the supplier and submission of indemnity bond by the contractor. This payment shall not exceed, in any case 60% of the total cost of the invoice. The payment shall be made after confirming to all specifications supported with check certificates/verification certificates from all quarters as per NIT conditions.
 - As per the bond the contractor shall be custodian of the supplied pipe/material and responsible for its storage, security and up keeping (watch and ward) at site.
 - The contractor shall procure the pipes only after firming up of lengths and diameters of the pipes after confirmatory site survey which shall be authenticated by the concerned JEE's. Any material procured by the contractor without adhering to these conditions shall be at his own risk and cost for which no supply payment shall be made.
 - At any point of time of the quantity of unlaied pipe at site for which supply payment has been made to the contractor shall not exceed 50% of the total pipe component of the Project.
 - The security deposit and the performance security shall be released to the contractor after the successful completion of trial run and defect liability period as detailed below:-
 - TRIAL RUN
- There shall be free trial run three months after completion of all the components of scheme in all aspects. During the trial run the contractor will have to operate and maintain the whole scheme in a manner as envisaged to run after the successful completion of the scheme and will ensure availability of drinking water to the consumer as per the guidelines of the JMM.

No: PHE/AWP/21-27
Dated:- 17-04-2021

DIPK-640/21

DISCLAIMER: KASHMIR OBSERVER MAKES EVERY EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT THE INFORMATION CARRIED IN DISPLAY/ CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS, APPEARING IN THE NEWSPAPER IS CORRECT. HOWEVER THE NEWSPAPER TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY NOR DOES IT NECESSARILY ENDORSE THE CONTENTS OF THESE ADVERTS. THE READERS ARE THEREFORE REQUESTED TO VERIFY THE CONTENTS BEFORE ACTING THEREUPON. MANAGEMENT

SDA's Sangarmal Shopping Complex Running Into Losses

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: No business and establishment at Sangarmal shopping complex in Srinagar has a lease agreement—contrary to it the space holders owe a whopping amount of more than Rs 15 crores to the Government on the account of total outstanding premium and interest against them.

According to the official documents, a premium of a total amount of Rs eleven crores and forty-five lakhs (Rs 11,45,99,542) were generated by the government on the account of goodwill (Nazrana), rent, license fees received from Sangarmal Complex from the date of its inauguration till 31 Dec 2018.

Similarly, an amount of Rs 37,88,970 was also generated from the rent charges till 31-12-2018.

In May-2019, the Public In-



formation Officer (PIO) of Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) in a reply to the queries of the RTI applicant regarding the details of individuals, business, and establishments with

whom the lease agreement was executed and registered so far, the PIO has stated "None".

However, the officials of SDA said that since 2019, a few persons have paid all the premium

and pending rent of their establishments.

"Some 2-3 persons paid the full premium amount and are now legally lease holders of the space," the official said.

"However most of the space holders of the complex are yet to pay full premium amount," he said.

SDA officials also said that the lease agreement for the shop in the Sangarmal complex remains valid for twenty years.

According to the RTI reply, the statement showing the list of defaulters with total outstanding Premium interest as on 31-05-2018 was Rs 15.49 crores (Rs 154,979,987).

Apart from the outstanding premium, space holders even owe Lakh's of Rupees on the account of the monthly rent to their spaces and shops.

The PIO has stated that in the complex, 23 business houses and establishments are the major defaulters in payment of rent and goodwill.

The official documents further state that the space in Sangarmal Complex has been allotted to different 125 individuals and establishments—(KNO)

KU, SGSU Sign MoU To Collaborate In Mutually Agreeable Academic Events



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The University of Kashmir on Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Swarnim Gujarat Sports University (SGSU) to promote sports education and research alongside giving a fillip to sports activities in a big way.

The MoU was signed by Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir Prof Talat Ahmad and Vice-Chancellor SGSU Dr Arjunsinh Rana at a modest ceremony at the KU campus.

According to the MoU, the two varsities shall collaborate in mutually agreeable academic events for promotion of competitive sports and quality research work, including conducting adventure/sports activities, seminars and conferences for students and faculty while starting exchange programmes for research scholars and other students.

The faculty members, research scholars and students shall be allowed to make use of library resources, research laboratories, high-end instruments and equipment as and when desired, the MoU reads.

The two varsities also intend to promote the government-led Fit India Movement and establish Fit India Youth Clubs at constituent and affiliated institutions of the University of Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Talat said it's a momentous occasion for the university to sign a pact to promote not only sports activities in a big way but also give a boost to sports education and research.

"With this MoU both universities have opened their doors for students and faculty and learn from each others' expertise and exposure," he said, asserting that the University of Kashmir is already on job to boost indoor and outdoor sports activities at the university and college levels.

Earlier, Dr Arjunsinh Rana outlined the aims and objectives of the MoU while highlighting the activities and achievements of SGSU, a state university founded in 2011 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

"Under this MoU we will be coaching 45 students from Kashmir in various sports categories while urging more students to join us in this endeavour to help them excel as world-class educators in the field of physical education and sports," he said.

KU's Dean of Academic Affairs Prof Shabir A Bhat gave a brief of various sports and extra-curricular activities being undertaken by the university as well as its MoUs with other institutions in areas of academics, research and extension education.

The MoU signing ceremony was also attended by top KU officers including Dean Research Prof Shakil A Romshoo, Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir, Dean Behavioural Sciences Prof Showkat A Shah, Coordinator Directorate of Physical Education and Sports (DPES) Dr Nisar A Khan and Assistant Director DPES Nadeem Ahmad Dar.

Tulip Garden Witnesses Steep Decline In Visitors

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: With the recent spike in Covid-19 positive cases in Kashmir, the Tulip Garden in Srinagar is witnessing a sharp drop in visitors, with only 2000 people visiting the garden a day.

A top official of the Floriculture department said that after the garden was thrown open for the public on 25 March this year, the number of visitors was increasing and this year department had planted around 1.5 million Tulip bulbs, but the recent spurt in Covid-19 positive cases is playing a spoilsport.

Hotellers associated with the Tourism Industry said the majority of the hotels were sold out till May end, "but the recent spurt in the Covid-19 Positive and imposition of Covid-19 lockdown in different parts of the Country, the footfall of tourists in the valley witnessed a steep decline."



Ko Photo Abid Bhat

"Many tourists have cancelled their bookings due to the prevailing Covid-19 situation," they said.

Notably the beauty of the Tulip Garden was showcased in different programs and events by the Directorate of Tourism Kashmir in different parts of the country, which eventually became a success in attracting the Tourists towards the valley.

Officials in the Floriculture department said that after the garden was thrown open for the

visitors on 25 March this year, more than 2.20 lakh visitors visited the garden so far which was expected to increase.

"With summers ahead, we were expecting the increase in the number of visitors, but due to the spurt in the Covid-19 positive cases, the footfall has gone considerably down, around two thousand visitors visit the park these days, and from 15th April to 19th April, around 7165 visitors have visited the garden", an official said—(KNO)

Three More Srinagar Localities Declared Micro-Containment Zones

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The authorities on Tuesday declared three more localities of capital city Srinagar as micro-containment zones in view of detection of fresh Covid-19 cases.

In an order, the Srinagar administration said that three more localities including Hazratbal and SR Gunj have been declared as Covid-19 containment zones to prevent the further spread of the virus.

The areas include Saderbal near Masjid Amir Hanfia, Braripora Sekidafar and Malikyar Fateh Kadal.

Officials said that these areas have at least 15 active cases of Covid-19 and to prevent the further spread of the virus, these localities have been declared as micro-containment zones.

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF HORTICULTURE, KASHMIR
Rajbagh, Srinagar, opposite Presentation Convent School -190008
TELEFAX: 01942311287/2311484 Email: Kashmirhorticulture@gmail.com
website: <http://hortikashmir.gov.in>**

Advisory for Apple growers of Kashmir Valley

Due to incessant rains following measures are suggested to prevent the further spread of disease:

- For areas where the apple orchards are at Pink bud stage, spray any one of the following fungicides:
 - Zineb 68% + Hexaconazole 4% 72WP @ 100gm/100 Litres of water.
 - Dodine 65 WP @ 60g/100 Litres of water.
 - Dodine 40SC @ 90ml/100 Litres of water.
 - Fluxapyroxad (250g/l)+Pyraclostrobin (250g/l) 500 SC @ 20ml/100 Litres of water.
- For areas where the apple orchards are at Bloom/Petal fall stage, spray any one of the following fungicides:
 - Difenaconazole 25 EC @ 30ml/100 Litres of water.
 - Flusilazole 40EC@20ml/100 litres of water.
 - Trifloxystrobin 25% + Tebuconazole 50% 75WG@40g/100 litre of water.

Important Instructions:

- Spray at bloom stage be conducted if scab lesions are observed and the previous spray has been conducted more than 10 days ago.
- Low volume (Mist type) sprayer needs to be used for spraying during bloom.
- In case of heavy rains (within 12 hours of spray) the spray is to be repeated immediately.
- Stickers (Sandovit@ 50-75ml/100 litre of fungicide suspension) may be added except with Dodine, for better efficacy of fungicides.
- Ensure proper drainage to avoid water stagnation in the orchards.
- Ensure orchard sanitation by destruction of weeds/grasses.
- Same fungicide should not be repeated continuously in two sprays.

In case of query contact nearest Zonal office of your area or contact on the following phone Nos:

Directorate of Horticulture Rajbagh Srinagar 0194-2311484, 2311287	
CHO Srinagar:01942311456-9419138794	CHO Ganderbal:019512416875-6005403530
CHO Budgam:01951255278-9622623996	CHO Bandipora:01957225101-7006451322
CHO Baramulla:01954222292-7006524304	CHO Kupwara:01955262665-9596037070
CHO Pulwama:01933219251-9419185791	CHO Anantnag:01932223041-7006349858
CHO Kulgam:01931215358-7006190040	CHO Shopian:01933260280-7051585438

DIPK-673/21

Deputy Director Horticulture

DIAL-EMMA



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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS



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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 43 BC - Battle of Mutina: Mark Antony is again defeated in battle by Aulus Hirtius, who is killed. Antony fails to capture Mutina and Decimus Brutus is murdered shortly after.
- 1453 - Turkish fleet sinks ships Golden Receiver in Constantinople
- 1521 - Battle at Villalar: Emperor Charles I beats Communards
- 1526 - Battle at Panipat: Central Asian conqueror Babur defeats Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, establishing the Mughal Empire in India.
- 1572 - France & England sign anti-Spanish military covenant
- 1649 - Maryland Toleration Act passed in the American colony, allowing freedom of worship for Christians but sentencing to death anyone who rejected the divinity of Jesus
- 1654 - England & Sweden sign trade agreement
- 1689 - William III & Mary Stuart proclaimed King & Queen of England
- 1739 - Spain & Naples-Austria sign peace accord
- 1796 - Napoleon and the French defeat the Piedmontese at Battle of Moncenisio
- 1836 - Battle of San Jacinto, Texas wins independence from Mexico
- 1857 - Alexander Douglas patents the bustle
- 1898 - Spanish-American War: The U.S. Congress, on April 25, recognizes that a state of war exists between the United States and Spain as of this date.
- 1945 - Allied troops occupy German nuclear laboratory
- 1945 - He Shima Okinawa conquered in 5 days, 5,000 die
- 1954 - Gregori Malenkov becomes premier of USSR
- 1954 USAF flies French battalion to Vietnam
- 1960 - Brasilia becomes capital of Brazil
- 1963 - The Universal House of Justice of the Bahá'í Faith is elected for the first time.
- 1969 - The Ministry of Defence in London announces that British troops would be used in Northern Ireland to guard key public installations following a series of bombings
- 1972 - John Young & Charles Duke explores Moon (Apollo 16)
- 1972 - Orbiting Astronomical Observatory 4 (Copernicus) launched
- 1976 - Swine Flu vaccine, for non-epidemic, enters testing
- 1976 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalitinsk USSR
- 1977 - Zia ur-Rahman appointed president of Bangladesh
- 1981 - US furnish \$1 billion in arms to Saudi-Arabia
- 1987 - Tamil bomb attack in Colombo Sri Lanka, 115 killed
- 1989 - Thousands of Chinese crowd into Beijing's Tiananmen Square cheering students demanding greater political freedom
- 1991 - French underwater archaeologist Franck Goddio discovers the San Diego, Dutch galleon sunk in 1600 off Fortune Island in the Philippines.
- 1997 - I. K. Gujral sworn in as Prime Minister of India
- 2008 - The United States Air Force retires the F-117 Nighthawk.
- 2012 - Two trains in Sloterdijk, Netherlands, injure 117 people in a head on collision
- 2013 185 people are killed in a conflict between Islamic extremists and the Nigerian military
- 2013 - Horacio Cartes is elected President of Paraguay

From KO Archives

PAK, INDIA MUST SEIZE 'HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY': MUSHARRAF

MANILA - Pakistan and India must seize the "historic opportunity" for peace in the wake of the recent meeting 'of the two countries leaders, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf said here today.

Addressing the Philippine Congress following his trip to New Delhi, Musharraf said that he was "encouraged by my interaction" with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and other Indian leaders.

"Both sides realise the historic opportunity created by the improvement in bilateral

Relations must be seized to address the. Long standing Kashmir dispute squarely with determination, courage and flexibility," he said.

He said success in this area would "usher in a new era of durable peace, trust and confidence that would ensure a bright future for the region.

Musharraf, who is on a three-day state visit to this country remarked that East and Southeast Asia had left South Asia behind in economic growth, remarking that "our neighbourhood has remained disturbed due to the turmoil in Afghanistan and the Kashmir issue between India Pakistan.

The Pakistan President said with the improvements in Afghanistan and the warming of ties between India and Pakistan, the situation in the South Asian region should improve.

He expressed hope that Pakistan could use its strategic location as a crossroads between South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia to "promote economic cooperation within these regions through special arrangements and development of infrastructure. (AFP)

(Kashmir Observer, 21 April, 2005)

UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR
NAAC Accredited Grade "A+" | HAZRATBAL, SRINAGAR

NOTICE - 1

It is notified for the information of all the concerned candidates that the **Re- Examination of the Paper "Physical Geography" of BG 2nd Year Single Paper Scheme (Mercy/ Backlog/Division Improvement/ Additional)** which was earlier held on **25-02-2021 stands cancelled** and shall now be held on **04-05-2021(Tuesday) at 2:00 P.M**

Venue shall remain unchanged.

NOTICE - 2

It is notified for the information of all the concerned candidates that the **Re- Examination of the Paper "English Literature" of BG 2nd Year Single Paper Scheme (Mercy/ Backlog/Division Improvement/ Additional)** which was earlier held on **16-02-2021 stands cancelled** and shall now be held on **30-04-2021(Friday) at 2:00 P.M**

Venue shall remain unchanged.

Sd/- Asstt. Controller of Examination
(Conduct)

No: Gen-18/21

Pakistan Parliament To Vote On French Envoy's Expulsion After Protests



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's government will seek a vote in parliament on Tuesday on whether to expel the French ambassador after violent anti-France protests by Islamists demanding action over cartoons depicting Prophet Mohammad, the interior minister said.

Prime Minister Imran Khan warned his nation in a televised address late on Monday that Pakistan risked paying a price if it expelled the French envoy, as half the country's exports are sold to the European Union.

Relations between Paris and Islamabad became more strained after President Emmanuel Macron paid tribute late last year to a French teacher who was beheaded by a man of Chechen origin for showing cartoons depicting the Prophet in a class on freedom of speech.

Muslims consider such drawings of their Prophet to be blasphemous.

The expulsion of the ambassador is one of the main four demands of a radical Tehrik-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) group, which the government banned last week after its members blocked main highways, railways and access routes to major cities, assaulting police and burning public property.

Four police officers were killed, almost a dozen were taken hostage and more than 800 wounded, many of them seriously, during clashes with the Islamists.

The Islamists say that three TLP members were also killed. The violence erupted after the government detained TLP leader Saad Hussain Rizvi ahead of a planned countrywide anti-France campaign aimed at pressuring Prime Minister Khan to take action.

On Monday, the government said it had entered negotiations with the TLP, and that the Islamist group had freed 11 police that had been snatched during a clash outside the TLP's headquarters in the eastern city of Lahore.

"After long negotiations between government of Pakistan and the TLP, this has been agreed that we will table a resolution in parliament today to expel French ambassador," Interior Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said in a video recorded statement.

Aside from wanting the ambassador expelled, the TLP is demanding the release of their leader and hundreds of arrested workers, the removal of ban on the group and the dismissal of the interior minister.

All cases registered against the TLP and its workers will be withdrawn, the interior minister said, adding that the group will end all the sit-in protests from across the country. **REUTERS**

China Is World's 'Biggest Jailer Of Journalists', Says RSF



Agencies

China continues to take internet censorship, surveillance and propaganda to "unprecedented levels", Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has said, making it one of the world's worst countries for journalists.

In its annual press freedom index, published on Tuesday, the global watchdog also highlighted an increase in repression and attacks on journalists worldwide during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The index evaluates the press freedom situation in 180 countries and territories, and RSF said its data showed that journalism is "totally blocked or seriously impeded" in nearly three-quarters of the countries evaluated, making it even harder for people to access proper information at a time of a health emergency.

Aside from China, the four countries at the bottom of the ranking are Djibouti, Turkmenistan, North Korea and Eritrea. Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Costa Rica were ranked highest for press freedom.

"Journalism is the best vaccine against disinformation," RSF Secretary-General Chris-

tophe Deloire said in a statement accompanying the report.

"In response to the virality of disinformation across borders, on digital platforms and via social media, journalism provides the most effective means of ensuring that public debate is based on a diverse range of established facts."

Deloire, however, said that the production and distribution of information "are too often blocked by political, economic, technological and, sometimes, even cultural factors".

'Biggest jailer'
In 2021, China continued to be the world's "biggest jailer of press freedom defenders", RSF said, with more than 120 currently detained in the country, "often in life-threatening conditions".

Since the emergence of COVID-19, Chinese authorities have tightened their grip on news and information, with seven journalists still being held for their coverage of the pandemic. Lawyer-turned-journalist Zhang Zhan is among those in prison.

She was found guilty in December of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" for her reporting on the pandemic in Wuhan, where the novel virus was first detected.

WHO: World Can Bring Pandemic Under Control Within Months



The world can bring the global Covid-19 pandemic under control in the coming months provided it distributes the necessary resources fairly, the head of the World Health Organization (WHO) told a news briefing on Monday.

Global climate change activist Greta Thunberg, joining the briefing as a virtual guest from Sweden, took a swipe at "vaccine nationalism" and said it was unethical that rich countries were prioritising their younger citizens for vaccination ahead of vulnerable groups in developing countries.

"We have the tools to bring this pandemic under control in a matter of months, if we apply them consistently and equitably," said the head of WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

However, he also expressed concern over the "alarming rate" at which Covid-19 is spreading in those aged 25-59 worldwide, possibly due to much more contagious variants. "It took nine months to reach one million deaths; 4 months to reach 2 million, and 3 months to reach 3 million."

Thunberg said that whereas one in four people in high-income countries had now been vaccinated against Covid-19, only one in more than 500 people in poorer countries had received a shot.

"Vaccine nationalism is what is running the vaccine distribution," she said.

"The only morally right thing to do is to prioritise the people who are most vulnerable, whether they live in a high in-

come or a low-income country."

Thunberg also drew a direct link between the pandemic and the environmental destruction that she said made it much easier for dangerous viruses to leap from animal populations to humans.

"Science shows we will experience more frequent, devastating pandemics unless we drastically change our ways and the ways we treat nature ... We are creating ideal conditions for diseases to spill over from one animal to another and to us," she said.

Thunberg urged young people everywhere to get vaccinated if given an opportunity, even though they are the age group least at risk from Covid-19, out of "solidarity with people in the (high) risk groups."

A leading WHO epidemiologist, Maria van Kerkhove, told the same briefing that the latest surge in Covid-19 infections worldwide included increases among age groups previously less affected by the pandemic.

"We are seeing increased rates of transmission across all age groups," she said, adding that some 5.2 million cases were reported last week, the highest weekly increase since the start of the pandemic.

"We are seeing a slight shift in some countries, driven by social mixing," she added. **REUTERS**

WE HAVE THE TOOLS TO BRING THIS PANDEMIC UNDER control in a matter of months, if we apply them consistently and equitably," said the head of WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

NGOs Call For Urgent Aid As Millions On Brink Of Starvation

In open letter, over 250 NGOs call on governments to intervene as inequality coupled with the COVID crisis has led to an acute food crisis.

Agencies

More than 250 NGOs have urgently called on international governments to increase aid and save more than 34 million people on the brink of starvation this year.

In an open letter (PDF) addressed to world leaders on Tuesday, groups working to fight against inequality said up to 270 million people are acutely food insecure with millions "teetering on the very edge of famine".

"The combined impacts of conflict, climate change and inequality, coupled with the COVID-19 crisis, have led to an acute food insecurity situation around the world," the letter, whose key signatories include Oxfam, Save the Children, and the International Rescue Committee, read.

"Needs already cannot be met, and we are increasingly likely to face multiple famines if we do not respond now," the letter, which came in conjunction with the UN's call for action to avert famine, added.

In a joint statement, the aid groups noted that a year on since the UN warned of "famine of biblical proportions", donors have only funded five



percent of this year's \$7.8bn food security appeal.

The statement said that the amount of additional funding called for by the UN's World Food Programme amounts to \$5.5bn, which is equivalent to less than 26 hours of the \$1.9 trillion that countries spend per year on the military.

"The richest countries are slashing their food aid even as millions of people go hungry; this is an extraordinary political failure," Oxfam's executive director, Gabriela Bucher, said.

"They must urgently reverse these decisions. And we must confront the fundamental drivers of starvation - global

hunger is not about lack of food, but a lack of equality."

'I thought about suicide'

While at least \$5.5bn is needed in urgent food and agricultural assistance to avert the imminent risk of famine, millions more is needed to provide health care, clean water and other essential, basic services, the statement said.

At the end of last year, the UN estimated that 270 million people were either at high risk of, or already facing, severe levels of hunger. Some 174 people in 58 countries have reached that level and are at risk of dying from malnutrition or lack of food, the groups said.

Iran Says 60% Uranium Enrichment To Show Nuclear Prowess, Is Reversible



DUBAI: Iran began enriching uranium to 60% purity in order to show its technical capacity after a sabotage attack at a nuclear plant, and the move is quickly reversible if the United States lifts sanctions, the Iranian government said on Tuesday.

Talks in Vienna aimed at bringing the United States and Iran back to full compliance with a 2015 nuclear deal have been further complicated by an explosion at Iran's main uranium enrichment facility at Natanz.

Iran has responded by saying it is enriching uranium to 60% fissile purity, a big step towards weapons-grade from the 20% it had previously achieved. The 2015 pact between Iran and world powers had capped the level of enrichment purity at 3.67% - suitable for generating civilian nuclear energy. Iran denies seeking a nuclear weapon.

"The start of 60% enrichment in Natanz was a demonstration of our technical ability to respond to terrorist sabotage at these facilities," Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei told reporters in Tehran.

"As in previous steps (in curbing Iran's commitment to the 2015 nuclear deal), ... this measure can

quickly be reversed for a return to the agreed enrichment level in the nuclear accord if other parties commit to their obligations," Rabiei said, in remarks streamed live on a state-run website.

Tehran says the Natanz blast was an act of sabotage by Israel, and on Saturday Iranian authorities named a suspect. Israel has not formally commented on the incident.

Iran responded to the explosion by saying it is enriching uranium to 60%.

Iran and world powers have made some progress on how to revive the 2015 nuclear accord later abandoned by the United States, and an interim deal could be a way to gain time for a lasting settlement, Iranian officials said on Monday.

In Jerusalem, Israeli Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi told visiting British Cabinet Office Minister Michel Gove that Iran should not be permitted to obtain a nuclear weapon.

"Iran is undermining stability in the entire Middle East and the international community must act to prevent Iran from achieving nuclear weapons capability. Not today and not in the future," an Israeli statement quoted Ashkenazi as saying. **REUTERS**

US Advises Its Citizens To Avoid Travelling To India Due To Covid Spike

WASHINGTON: The US has advised its citizens to avoid travelling to India, even if they are fully vaccinated as there is a "very high level" of Covid in the country.

The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Monday released travel recommendations by destination. It uses science-based Travel Health Notices to alert travellers to health threats around the world and advises on how to protect themselves.

The CDC has a four-level system for Covid and in that India is placed in 'Level 4: Very high level of Covid'.

The department noted, "The Covid pandemic continues to pose unprecedented risks to travellers."

The CDC has urged Americans to avoid all travel to India.

"Travellers should avoid all travel to India. Because of the current situation in India even fully vaccinated travellers may be at risk for getting and spreading Covid variants and should avoid all travel to India," the CDC said in a statement.

"Because of the current situation in India even fully vaccinated travellers may be at risk for getting and spreading Covid variants and should avoid all travel to India."

"If you must travel to India, get fully vaccinated before travel. All travellers should wear a mask, stay six feet from others, avoid crowds, and wash their hands," it said.

The number of active coro-



navirus cases surpassed the 20-lakh mark in India as the country continued to record a mammoth surge in daily cases of the coronavirus disease.

The nationwide tally of Covid cases mounted to 1,53,21,089 with a record single-day rise of 2,59,170 coronavirus infections, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday.

The State Department announced on Monday that it would begin to update its travel advisories to more closely align with those from the CDC. The update comes as the world continues to grapple with the coronavirus pandemic, which has now claimed more than 3 million lives worldwide.

It strongly recommended US citizens to reconsider all travel abroad encompassing 80 per cent of the world.

The advisories, it said, also take into account logistical factors, including in-country testing availability and current travel restrictions for US citizens. **PTI**

NEWS MAKERS

Nepal's Former King, Queen Test Covid Positive On Return From Mahakumbh: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

KATHMANDU: Nepal's former King Gyanendra Shah and former Queen Komal Shah have tested positive for the coronavirus on their return from India after attending the Mahakumbh in Haridwar, according to a media report on Tuesday.

The 73-year-old former King and 70-year-old former Queen recently returned from India where they had taken a holy dip at Haridwar's Har Ki Pauri during the Mahakumbh - a religious congregation of Hindu seers and devotees, according to the Health Ministry.

Their samples for the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test were confirmed positive for coronavirus infection, The Himalayan Times reported.

According to the report, hun-



dreds of people had gathered at the Kathmandu Airport to welcome the former king and queen when they returned from India.

The authorities have started tracing anyone who came in contact with the royal couple and testing them.

Gyanendra Shah was crowned the King of Nepal in 2001 after his elder brother Birendra Bir Bi-

kram Shah Dev and his family were killed at the Royal Palace.

An investigation blamed Birendra Bir Bikram Dev's son Dipendra, who was among the dead, for the massacre.

Gyanendra Shah stepped down in 2008, after a popular revolt forced him to abdicate, and the centuries-old monarchy was abolished, turning the country into a republic by

the Constituent Assembly.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week appealed to the sadhus to observe the remaining duration of the Kumbh only in a "symbolic" manner in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Mahakumbh formally began in Haridwar on April 1 with several restrictions imposed on devotees coming to attend the event amid rising cases of COVID-19 in various states, including Uttarakhand.

A negative Reverse Transcription-Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test report not older than 72 hours from the time of arrival was made mandatory for devotees attending the event.

The Maha Kumbh is held every 12 years and under normal circumstances for nearly four months. Its was last held in Haridwar from January 14 to April 28 in 2010.

Chad President Idriss Deby Dies On Frontline, Son To Take Over

N'DJAMENA: Chad's President Idriss Deby has died while visiting troops on the frontline of a fight against northern rebels, the army said on Tuesday, the day after Deby was declared the winner of a presidential election.

Deby's son, Mahamat Kaka, was named interim president by a transitional council of military officers, spokesman Azem Bermendao Agouna said in a broadcast on state television.

Deby, 68, came to power in a rebellion in 1990 and was one of Africa's longest-ruling leaders. He and his army have been seen as a reliable Western ally in a turbulent region afflicted by jihadists.

His campaign said on Monday he was joining troops on the frontline after rebels based across the northern frontier in Libya advanced hun-



dreds of km (miles) south toward the capital N'Djamena.

The exact cause of death was not yet clear but a European diplomatic source said he had been killed.

"A call to dialogue and peace is launched to all Chadians in the country and abroad in order to continue to build Chad together," Bermendao said, surrounded by several officers.

"The National Council of Transition reassures the Chadian people

that all measures have been taken to guarantee peace, security and the republican order," he said.

Deby, whose opponents accused him of repressive rule, pushed through a new constitution in 2018 that would have allowed him to stay in power until 2033 - even as it re-instated term limits.

He took the title of "Marshal" last year and said before last week's election: "I know in advance that I will win, as I have done for the last 30 years."

He was dealing with mounting public discontent over his management of Chad's oil wealth and crackdowns on opponents.

But in the election results announced on Monday, Deby was credited with 79% of the vote, handing him a sixth term in office. Several leading opposition figures boycotted the poll. **REUTERS**

Girl Kidnapped, 'Raped' In Doda; Rescued After She Attempted Suicide: Police



Observer News Service

THATHRI: A 15-year-old girl was rescued after she attempted to end her life days after she was kidnapped and allegedly raped in the Thathri area of Doda district on Tuesday.

Police officials said that the girl was rescued by the local of Thathri after she jumped into the Kalnai river in a bid to end her life.

A police official said the police received a complaint on April 17. In the complaint, a local resident of Nagni village said that his 15-yr-old daughter was kidnapped by Rehan, a resident

of Gandoh.

He said that an FIR was registered at Thathri Police Station.

Station House Officer (SHO) Thathri Javid Iqbal said during raids at several places the girl could not be traced. However, later the missing girl surfaced on her own and jumped into the river Kalnai but was rescued.

He said that upon questioning the girl revealed that after leaving her house she went to Kishtwar and spent a night at Kishtwar hospital.

"On 16 April she come back from Kishtwar in a minibus and after reaching Thathri the conductor of the vehicle took her to an isolated place in the same vehicle and during the night raped her," he said.

He said that the conductor of the vehicle Mukesh Kumar, son of Banka Ram, a resident of Lawa village of Kishtwar was arrested from an isolated in Thathri. He said the vehicle has also been seized and further investigation of the case is going on—(KNO)

Five Persons Arrested For Illegal Mining In Budgam



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Jammu and Kashmir Police in Budgam Tuesday seized six vehicles and arrested five persons involved in illegal extraction and transportation of raw materials.

A police spokesperson in a statement said that a police officer arrested five persons and seized 2 tippers and 4 tractors involved in the extraction and transportation of raw materials illegally extracted from streams in Budgam.

The accused persons have been identified as Farooq Ahmed Mir son of Abdul Rehman Mir, a resident of Kanirah

Budgam, Noor Mohammed Bhat son of Maqbool Bhat, a resident of Arigam Budgam, Showkat Ahmed Malla son of Ghulam Ahmed Malla, a resident of Dreygam, Arampora, Mohammed Ashiq Ganie son of Ghulam Hassan Ganie, a resident of Kalichipora Budgam and Ghulam Hassan Mir son of Abdul Ganie Mir, a resident of Burgoon Budgam. "They have been shifted to the police station where they remain in custody."

The spokesperson said that a case vide FIR No. 55/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Khanshab and investigation initiated.

Retired JKTDC Employees Demand Release Of Arrears

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The JKTDC Retired Employees Association Tuesday expressed concern over the non release of their cola arrears, 7th pay commission arrears and other due arrears in favour of the deceased employees.

The employees met in Srinagar to express grief and sorrow over the demise of GM Bhat and Som Dutt Sharma who were suffering from ailments but due to non availability of medical expenses passed away.

In a statement, the retired employees said that though the Managing Director JKTDC and the FACAO were well in time requested to release their arrears for the treatment of deceased but they turned deaf ear with the result both employees died without having timely treatment due to the negligence of JKTDC management.

The association condemned the attitude of JKTDC management towards its retirees who worked for the development of the corporation in odd times particularly during 1990's, 2010-2016.

"The JKTDC management is aware that the retired employees are suffering badly as we have no pension so how long shall we remain dependent on others when we have our own earned money with JKTDC," they asked.

The association urged the Managing Director JKTDC Srinagar to release all pending dues (cola arrears, leave salary arrears, 7th pay commission, gratuity arrears) in their favour without further delay otherwise the association shall be compelled to come on roads.

The association also appealed the advisor LG in charge Tourism to intervene in the matter on humanitarian grounds.

CB Books Ganderbal Resident In Fraud Case

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Crime Branch Kashmir Tuesday produced a Charge Sheet against Muzaffar Ahmad Shah, son of Shams Ud Din Shah, a resident of Ganderbal in a fraud case before the Court of Forest 3rd Civil Subordinate Judge Srinagar.

A statement issued by CB said that Crime Branch Kashmir received a complaint endorsed by Court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Srinagar alleging that the accused has deceitfully and fraudulently obtained an amount of Rs.16 lacs from the complainant under the garb of providing Government Job.

During the course of investigation it was found that the accused



induced the complainant to pay an amount of 16 lacs from him on the pretext of providing Government Job to the complainant, however, the accused provided fake appointment orders.

These acts on part of the accused prima facie discloses commission of offences Punishable U/S 420, 468, 471, RPC and accordingly the instant case FIR No.21/2013 was registered.

COVID-19

Doctors Body Calls For Improved Ventilation To Minimise Risk Of Air Transmission

SRINAGAR: With the new evidence revealing that Covid-19 spreads through the air, Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) Tuesday called for an urgent change of safety norms.

A study published in Lancet revealed that indoor airborne transmission associated with small aerosol droplets plays a dominant role in the spread of Covid-19. Till now, large droplet transmission was considered to be the main mode of transmission, and emphasis was laid on staying 2 meter apart from the next person, cleaning surfaces and wearing gloves.

"We need to focus on measures that would prevent airborne transmission of the virus which is now considered to be the primary route of spread," said DAK President in a statement.

He said improving indoor ventilation would help tackle airborne transmission, open-

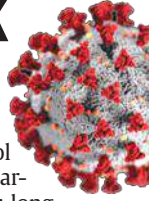
ing windows for proper ventilation could be a significant measure at controlling the spread of Covid-19, the simple measure plays a critical role in removing contaminated air and protecting people.

"Upgrading ventilation systems to improve ventilation rates and eliminate air-recirculation would help reduce the risk of airborne infection, people are much more likely to become infected in poorly ventilated spaces," Dr Nisar, DAK president cautioned.

He said that the use of sufficient and effective ventilation in public buildings including hospitals, shops, offices, restaurants, elevators, schools, conference rooms or public transport would be a critical measure to reduce the likelihood of virus transmission and thereby protect healthcare workers, patients and the general public.

"But in aerosol transmission, particles can travel for long distance of 20-30 feet and can remain suspended in air for hours. So if an infected person coughs and sneezes in a closed space, the virus may be present in the air even after he is gone, emphasising the importance of ventilation," Dr Nisar cautioned.

"Another crucial implication of airborne spread is that the quality of the mask matters for effective protection against inhaled aerosols. Masks usually impede large droplets from landing on covered areas, and most are at least partially effective against inhalation of aerosols, both high filtration efficiency and a good fit are needed to enhance protection against aerosols because tiny airborne particles can find their way around any gap between mask and face," said Dr Nisar.



Same Covid Strain In Kashmir As Existed Last Year: Director SKIMS

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Director Sher-e-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) Soura Dr. A G Ahanger Tuesday said that Covid samples from Kashmir are being sent to New Delhi and Pune testing facilities but there has not been a change in the Covid strain that existed in the Valley last year. He, however, said the Covid cases have shown a "tremendous surge" in the past two months.

"We have been sending the Covid samples of patients to New Delhi and Pune laboratories for testing. There has been no change in the Covid strain that existed in Kashmir last year so far," Ahanger said in reply to a query during a press conference in Srinagar.

Earlier, briefing the media men about the present situation at the SKIMS Soura tertiary care hospital, Director SKIMS said there are 260 beds specifically for the Covid patients at SKIMS.

"Level 3 care is available at the SKIMS and Infectious Diseases Block (IDB) is dealing with it," he said, adding surgeries that can wait are being delayed for some time.

He said that from the 1900 litres of oxygen available at one point of time at SKIMS, the hospital has 3250 litres of oxygen per minute. "Besides, we are enhancing the oxygen facilities in the coming months and with that we will be having additional 1250 litres of oxygen available per minute," he said. "The only issue we are facing is non-availability of injection Remedisvir."

He said that so far four lakh plus RTPCR tests have been done at SKIMS and 22000 patients have been treated. "Till mid-January 2021, Covid figures were

17L People Vaccinated In J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has vaccinated around 17 lakh people against the COVID-19 with no reported case of extreme adverse events.

As per the official figures available till April 19, over 16.9 lakh have been vaccinated of which 8.14 lakh people have been inoculated with COVID vaccine in Kashmir division while 8.76 people have been vaccinated in Jammu division.

State immunisation officer Dr Shahid said that 140,215 of the healthcare workers, 407,701 of the frontline workers and 1,142,828 persons above 45 years of age have been inoculated.

The total number of healthcare workers who have received their first dose of Covid-19 stand at 90,807 and 49,409 healthcare workers have received both doses of Covid-19, he said.

He said that among front line workers, 259,895 persons have the first dose of Covid-19 vaccination while 147,806 front line workers have received both

doses of Covid-19.

The total numbers of persons above 45 years who have the first dose of Covid-19 vaccination stands at 1,084,039 while as 58,789 persons above 45 years have received both doses of vaccination, he said.

"Initially the pace of vaccination drive had decreased in Muslim dominant areas due to fasting, however, after coming to know that it won't affect their fasting, people have again started to come up to vaccination centres and get vaccinated," Shahid said.

"On 19th April, 34,981 persons from Kashmir and 29,833 persons from Jammu were vaccinated," he said.

The vaccines are being administered free of cost at all government CVCs and against the payment of Rs 250 per dose at private centres, officials said.

The government has now decided to vaccinate people above 18 years. In this regard, the health department in collaboration with the administration has chalked out a strategy to roll out vaccination from April 15. (Agencies)

negligible as only 15 to 20 patients were admitted in the hospital. Since the past two and half months, there has been a tremendous surge in cases. At present 156 covid patients are admitted in the hospital of which two are on invasive ventilation and four non-invasive ventilation. In the past 24 hours, there has been no death," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Government Medical College Srinagar, said that

primarily SMHS deals with the non-Covid patients but still 232 beds have been kept for the Covid patients. "We usually refer the Covid patients to Chest Diseases hospital, which is a designated hospital where oxygen facility is also available," she said, adding that at SMHS there is adequate supply of oxygen available and today 300 Remedisvir injections were procured as well. "However, we are all geared up to deal with any exigency," she said.

Power Woes: Panzgam Residents Reel Under Darkness

Observer News Service

PULWAMA: The residents of Panzgam village of Awantipora area in South Kashmir are reeling under darkness as the electricity transformer of the area has developed a technical snag for the third time in the last month.

The residents said that amid the closure of schools the classes and exams of their children are conducted online, which requires electricity, but in the absence of electricity, they are facing a lot of inconveniences.

They said that the power transformer in the area breaks down repeatedly and on several occasions, they asked the department to look into the matter but to no avail.

"This transformer was repaired around 10 days before but it again got damaged due to which we are facing a lot of problems at Sehri and Ifitari time," said Mohammad Shafi a local resident.

"We had repeatedly requested the authorities to install another transformer in the neighborhood so that we will not face any difficulties on a daily basis," he said.

Officials repeatedly assured that a second transformer would be installed soon, but all the promises made to date proved futile, Shafi said.

Locals requested concerned authorities to look into the matter at the earliest so that locals can have a sigh of relief—(KNO)

Four Arrested For Violation Of Covid-19 SOPs: Police

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In the wake of a surge in the number of coronavirus cases in Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Kashmir Police has arrested four persons in the last 24 hours, lodged two FIRs, and also realized a fine to the tune of Rs 88,480 from 799 people for violating the Covid-19 guidelines.

In a statement, a police spokesman said that the J&K Police has been organising several public awareness drives, interactions with religious leaders, distribution of masks, public announcements and distribution of pamphlets across Kashmir.

The spokesperson said that in Baramulla, in order to thin out the gathering during prayers a meeting with local mosque clerics was held who were requested to cooperate with Police in implementation of guidelines for the safety of people. They were

also advised for considering of dual sittings of Salah on eve of Jummah and other prayers.

In Anantnag, he said, Police warned of stringent action against people found without masks. Announcements were also made at markets and other places appealing citizens to adhere to the Govt SOPs, guidelines like maintaining of social distancing, wearing proper masks and avoiding the crowded places.

In Ganderbal, he said, Police carried out announcements throughout the district advising people to adhere to Covid-19 SOPs envisaged by Government to contain the spread of Covid-19.

In Srinagar the public was advised to adhere to the Covid-19 protocol strictly as responsible citizens to save themselves and others from the spread of the infection.

J&K Bank Opens Business Unit In Poonch's Sawjian Village

Observer News Service

JAMMU: As part of its commitment to provide state-of-the-art banking facilities to the people of region irrespective of their location and status, J&K Bank commissioned a business unit at Village Sawjian in Mandi tehsil of District Poonch.

Zonal Head Jammu (West) Rajouri Rajesh Dubey inaugurated the business unit, while observing Covid19 protocols, in presence of, Cluster Head Poonch Sanjeev Kumar Datta, Lead District Manager Poonch Sukhbir Singh, Director RSETI Vijay Singh, Business Unit Head Sawjian amid small gathering of valuable customers, prominent locals and staff members of the Bank. The opening of this business unit has taken the number of such units in the district to 27 and in the Zone to 62.

Speaking on the occasion, Zonal Head said, "Opening of this business unit will definitely



benefit the local population of the Sawjian and the adjoining villages as world class financial services besides latest banking facilities will now be available to the locals".

Further, he said that opening of the business unit would bring ease and convenience for the local population by delivering the banking services right near their doorstep as, earlier, they had to visit Business Unit Mandi for availing any such type of banking facility. On the occasion, Zonal Head urged the people to make full use of hi-tech facilities and avail various services/products offered by the Bank.

NEWS MAKERS

Dr Tasaduq Assumes Charge As Director School Education Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Dr Tasaduq Husain Mir Tuesday assumed the charge as Director School Education Kashmir.

He on the occasion said that the good and quality education is the guarantee of a great and well-mannered nation, education is the main edifice on which the super structure of the nation is built and therefore the quality education is needed in every Government and Private Institution to come up to the expectation of the common people.

Dr Tasaduq also chaired an introductory meeting with the officers and other officials of the Directorate of School Education Kashmir. He stressed upon the further strengthening and smooth functioning of the public delivery system.

The Director stressed upon the timely redressal of all the public grievances and also directed the subordinate staff to deal with the public with humbleness. No lapse in this regard shall be entertained.

He directed all the con-



cerned to follow the Covid-19 protocols in letter and spirit.

Meanwhile, the former DSEK Muhammad Younis Malik briefed the Dr. Tasaduq about the achievements of the department.

Later, the Director while briefing the media also laid stress on further strengthening of the online education system and any issue in this regard will

be resolved within a week.

He further said that adequate facilities in this regard shall be provided to the students of far flung areas of Kashmir valley like Gurez, Karnah, etc.

During the function, Joint Director Central Abid Husain presented the welcome address and OSD DSEK Hilal Ahmad Gilkar presented the vote of thanks.

Transporters Demand Hike In Fare Amid New Covid Guidelines

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Ahead of the new Covid guidelines for the transporters, The Transporters Welfare Forum (TWF) Tuesday called for a complete transport strike over fresh government order directing 50% passenger capacity in vehicles.

TS Wazir, President of Jammu and Kashmir Transporters Welfare Association said that the order regarding 50% passenger capacity in public transport has been taken without taking the stakeholders into confidence. He also said that with 50% passengers on board, transporters won't be able to even earn the money for even fuel.

He warned that if the government will not hike passenger fare by 50% then the transporters will go for a strike from tomorrow.

PAA Aspirants Awaiting Selection List Protest In Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Scores of candidates who recently qualified the Panchayat Accounts Assistant examinations staged a protest on Tuesday against the authorities for failing to publicise the final selection list of the aspirants.

The aspirants assembled at Press Enclave in Srinagar and held a protest demonstration. One of the protesting aspirants said that after the declaration of results in December last year, they were told that the final selection list of the candidates will be out within 45 days.

"However, over 100 days have passed since the results were out, but the candidates are still awaiting for the final selection list," he said.

He added a total of 1889 who passed the examinations conducted through SSB last year, have been awaiting the final selection list and are keen to serve the Union Territory. The candidates appealed to the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to personally intervene into the matter and ensure that the final selection list is made public without any further delay.

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the
Kashmir Observer LLP

Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001

Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.

RNI Registration No: 69503/98

Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16

Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider

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KO VIEW

Vaccine and SOP

As the coronavirus cases are surging once again in Jammu and Kashmir, the doctors are asking people to observe a civil imposed civil curfew. This is a good suggestion as the fight against Covid-19 pandemic has to be fought by the people. They can choose to exercise caution in their public behaviour, wear mask and wash hands. This alone is the least detrimental way out of the current crisis. Other option and which is the complete lockdown has proved more disastrous than the pandemic, leaving thousands unemployed. J&K has witnessed a 10-fold increase in COVID-19 infections over the last three weeks. However, it is still relatively less than the runaway surge in some other parts of the country. On Tuesday India's total tally of COVID-19 cases climbed to over 15 million with 2,59,170 new coronavirus infections. The active cases, as a result, have surpassed the 20-lakh mark. The death toll has increased to 1,80,530 with a record 1,761 new fatalities. This is a scary situation. The videos of the burning of pyres in some states have gone viral. The states like Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka have contributed most to the rising cases of coronavirus in the country. This has forced many countries to put India on no-travel list. The UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has cancelled his scheduled India visit.

India has already approved the use of more foreign vaccines in the country. The single-dose multinational pharma giant Johnson & Johnson has applied to India's drug regulator seeking permission to conduct phase-3 clinical trial of its vaccine as well as import license. licence.

The union government on Monday announced that all persons above 18 years of age will be eligible to get COVID-19 vaccine doses from May 1. This will go a long to arrest the spread of the contagion as even young people will be eligible for the inoculation. But the new "double mutant" strain will be certainly a challenge to the government. It is thought to more virulent than the previous strain. So, along with the vaccine it will even more important for people to exercise self restraint and observe Standard Operating Procedure. Government, on its part, needs to enforce some discipline among people who choose to go out for some work. For example, the people not wearing masks should face some penal action. The gatherings, both official, cultural and religious, should be discouraged. This alone can reduce the cases to manageable levels and eventually enable government reign the contagion in.

OTHER OPINION

The science of the second wave

India has now taken the global spotlight as the worst hotspot for Covid-19. The surge has triggered a key question. Is a variant of Sars-Cov-2 to blame? The question stems from the experiences of several other countries. The B.1.1.7 variant, first found in the United Kingdom, appears to trigger an entirely new wave of infections when it takes hold — this happened with England, then the rest of the island, followed by parts of Europe and the United States (US). Having gained an ability to spread more readily, B.1.1.7 has often required nothing less than a lockdown to slow it down.

Now, a new variant has been spotted in India — B.1.617. Where it was found and how frequently it has been spotted are worrying indicators for what it may be able to do. It arose in Maharashtra, which began bucking the national trend of flat case trajectories almost a fortnight before infections began to rise elsewhere. The state was eventually forced into a lockdown. The variant is now popping up in other countries, where calls are growing to ban flights from India. Western scientists spotted a tell-tale trend in genome sequences submitted from India to the global GISAID repository — the variant was popping up more frequently in samples. These patterns reinforce the fear that B.1.617 may be fuelling India's wave, although there is also a strong possibility the B.1.1.7 may have also taken hold. On March 24, health ministry officials said B.1.1.7 was found in large numbers in community samples in at least one state, Punjab.

Hindustan Times

Russia-US
Rapprochement?

The telephonic conversation between Biden and Putin has raised hopes of a breakthrough in strained relations between the two superpowers



ASAD MIRZA

A rational analysis of the recent and past events leads one to surmise that it is all a part of the political brinkmanship, by both the Americans and the Russian establishment. And in this game Biden has blinked first, giving advantage to Putin

The recent announcement by the White House sources that President Joe Biden has proposed that he and Russian President Vladimir Putin hold a summit in a third country in the coming months, has increased hopes of a rapprochement between the two old rivals.

This personal invitation was extended during a telephonic conversation between the two leaders trying to address deep differences, including Russia's recent troop build-up near Ukraine.

Mr Biden during the call with Mr Putin stressed his commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, while expressing concern over a Russian troop build-up on Ukraine's borders.

The White House said Mr Biden also made clear that the U.S. would defend its national interests in response to Russian actions including "cyber intrusions and election interference."

The call took place as Secretary of State Antony Blinken was in Brussels to meet Ukrainian officials and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies. NATO has called on Russia to end the military build-up. The Russian move has sparked concerns of a major escalation in the conflict between the two countries, which has simmered since the Kremlin invaded it in 2014.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin confirmed the two leaders discussed a possible summit, saying Mr Biden "expressed interest in normalising the state of affairs on the bilateral track."

Russian Manoeuvres

The Russian build-up along Ukraine has been impossible to be ignored by the international community. In response there were reports of two US warships reportedly heading for the Black Sea and Russia's foreign ministry warning them off "for their own good".

As the hostile rhetoric and military moves around Ukraine have intensified, Western politicians have begun fearing an open invasion and urging Russia's Vladimir Putin to "de-escalate".

In response Russia has refused to oblige. The Russian defence ministry insisted that its moves were in response to "threatening" NATO exercises in Europe.

However, a rational analysis of the recent and past events leads one to surmise that it is all a part of the political brinkmanship, by both the Americans and the Russian establishment.

And in this game Biden has blinked first, giving advantage to Putin.

The invitation for a summit contrasts to Biden's earlier actions and statements and his overall political ideology, which observers describe as being built on the principles of American pre-eminence.

This invitation comes just weeks after the US president agreed with an interviewer that the Russian leader was "a killer". A comment which sparked international concern.

President Biden's new move has started a new debate — whether it is disaster prevention or a mistaken concession — but in reality, now the risk of a major military action by Russia has certainly waned.

Russia's recent ostentatious troop movement always looked like grandstanding by a country that has given up trying to be liked by and now wants the West to fear it instead.

When Vladimir Putin sent troops and hardware into eastern Ukraine seven years ago, those were secret operations that are still denied to this day. However, this time, Russia seems more intent on sending signals rather than soldiers.

Another angle to the whole issue is the recent reinforcements in eastern Ukraine by Kiev government and the recent Russian actions are seen to avert any move to retake areas controlled by Russian-backed militants, by Kiev.

One senior Kremlin official has warned that such military action would be "the beginning of the end of Ukraine", whose government was children "playing with matches".

Moreover, Russia has another excuse to intervene in the region: some half a million people in the self-proclaimed "People's Republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk in eastern Ukraine have been issued with Russian passports since fighting broke out in 2014. And it would be plausible for Russia to come to their rescue if these 'republics' faced any threat.

Russian Message

However, one is led to infer that the real aim of troop amassing on the Ukrainian border is not the real intention. Instead the goal is somewhat different.

It seems that Russia is trying to avert the tough, new sanctions that the Biden administration is threatening in retaliation for Russia's election meddling, hacking attacks and more.

Last week, the US president signed an order to introduce sanc-

tions against Russia. In particular, the US prohibits its companies from buying Russian state bonds issued by the Central Bank, National Wealth Fund or the Finance Ministry after June 14, 2021. Washington also imposed sanctions against 16 organisations and 16 individuals allegedly involved in meddling in US elections. The sanctions also covered eight people and companies, connected to Crimea, including members of the regional government. Besides, the US expelled 10 diplomats working in the Russian Embassy in Washington. Which started a series of expulsions by Russia and Czech republic, as tit for tat.

This game of sanctions and offer to hold a summit simultaneously is perplexing for Moscow and the international community, both. Moscow considers it strange to impose sanctions and simultaneously offer to deepen the dialogue on strategic stability.

Mr Putin's intentions may become clearer next week when he's due to make his annual "state of the nation" address, a podium he's often used for sabre-rattling against the West.

But the call from Joe Biden may have given him a chance to pull back from this particular fight. The US has also decided to cancel sending two US warships to the Black Sea, a move which is seen as being conciliatory.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov has said that Moscow will act out of the principle of reciprocity towards Washington and its sanctions. According to Peskov, the new sanctions will not facilitate the summit proposed by Biden.

In the end a lot depends on how the two leaders interact at the summit and what more conciliatory and mollifying steps are taken by the two to deescalate the regional tension and work towards normalising the bilateral relationship. However, chances of a rapprochement seem too far-fetched, as each rival wants to lead the new world order.

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

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Are Examinations a Fair Way of Examining Our Knowledge?

Many students dislike exams and children of all ages seem to have a diet of more and more exams that they have to take. Coursework is being discredited as a way of demonstrating knowledge as it is becoming easier to plagiarise or even buy coursework over the internet. This leaves exams as the only obvious choice, but do they accurately & fairly test students' knowledge?

Academic competence and intelligence are not straightforward to measure and no method will fully capture the scope of a student's ability, but the fact remains that we need at least some formal system, otherwise the academic system will not

work. We need divisions between ability levels and the amount of experience and knowledge students actually possess, otherwise students will be in environments unsuited to them and won't be able to learn properly. There is no other way to divide them than by testing them in a fair and impartial manner. Exams are good at this because they are not vague — they have clear, measurable guidelines.

Guidelines are neither clear nor measurable. Students are duped into believing their innate abilities and potential are being tested whilst they are largely being tested on test-taking ability, confidence and pushiness.

Intellectual exploration is impeded with constant pulls towards mastering guess work and memorising 'standard' methods of answering 'repeated types' of questions that were originally set to test a student's response to unfamiliar problems. Subjective/qualitative papers with essay questions are not as easy to measure as mathematics or other quantitative papers. There are times when different examiners grade the same paper by the same student/pupil very differently.

Exams test memory more than analysis, creativity, or real understanding. If you have a good memory you can get away with doing very little work throughout

the course and still get very good grades. As well as causing personal problems, pressure can lead many bright students to under-perform. Exams test your ability to keep your cool more than they test your intelligence. Pressure is a fact of life and children must be prepared for it. Pressure only increases at university and in the workplace and we must teach children how to perform well in these conditions rather than protect them from them. Examination results depend on the opinion of the individual examiner.

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Lose The Virus, Keep The Mask

YOO JUNG KIM

Back then, I never would have expected that mask-wearing was to become mandatory. Then, at the beginning of the pandemic, industrious home sewers churned out fabric masks with rapid alacrity. Then mass-market clothing companies, such as Old Navy and Uniqlo, started offering multi-pack masks in their stores. Later, even luxury houses have followed suit, with brands like Burberry and Louis Vuitton offering facial coverings for consumers at exorbitant prices.

When I immigrated to the United States, I brought a cotton mask with me, and on a crisp fall day, I decided to wear it to my elementary school.

I grew up in South Korea, where mask-wearing was an accepted norm. Individuals would don face coverings for a myriad of reasons: when they were feeling sick; when they didn't have enough time to put on makeup; when the air was so cold it chapped their skin; and when high-speed winds kicked up dense dust storms in the deserts of China and Mongolia that wrought havoc on neighbouring countries.

When I immigrated to the United States, I brought a cotton mask with me, and on a crisp fall day, I decided to wear it to my elementary school. The mask immediately drew the attention of my concerned classmates and teacher, who asked if I was feeling OK. I stopped wearing it.

Back then, I never would have expected that mask-wearing was to become mandatory. Then, at the beginning of the pandemic, industrious home sewers churned out fabric masks with rapid alacrity. Then mass-market clothing companies, such as Old Navy and Uniqlo, started offering multi-pack masks in their stores. Later, even luxury houses have followed suit, with brands like Burberry and Louis Vuitton offering facial coverings for consumers at exorbitant prices.

Now that the United States is starting to lift the restrictions and mandates placed to stem further transmission of Covid-19, I hope that the trend of mask-wearing will continue among the public.

The primary reason for continued mask-wearing is for our continued safety. Even with the influx of vaccinations, Covid-19 and its variants will continue to be a vexing health concern in the future. For example, Pfizer's Chief Executive Officer Albert Bourla recently stated that those who received Covid-19 vaccinations would still likely require annual booster doses to update their immune systems against variants, like yearly flu vaccines. Continuing to don masks provides an extra layer of protection for some time to come.



Speaking of the flu, masks are also likely to prevent the transmission of diseases that we know well. In the 2019-2020 influenza season — a less deadly flu season than most — the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimated that 38 million individuals caught influenza, leading to 22,000 deaths. Now, nearing the end of the 2020-2021 season, flu mortality has been reduced to 585 cases thus far, making this season a non-event. While the impact of the masks is challenging to parse from the other interventions against Covid-19, such as maintaining social distancing, closing schools, and washing hands, previous researchers have also noted masks will reduce the transmission of respiratory viruses as well.

Furthermore, Covid-19 will not be our last pandemic. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, Ebola, avian influenza,

swine flu, Zika, and Dengue fever have occurred or recurred within the last 20 years. With the growing increase in global travel, climate change, and increased human-animal contact, the rise of new epidemics and pandemics will become more common.

Ultimately, the case for masks will be a matter of personal choice. However, I hope that the normalisation of masks this past year will allow them to take their rightful place in our wardrobes as an article of clothing with a specific purpose, akin to gloves and scarves. A mask may not be appropriate for all seasons or occasions, but it will be an article of clothing with an essential role in our self-expression and protection against the elements.

Khaleej Times

Is Double-Masking Better?

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH CARE

A study published on April 16, 2021, in JAMA Internal Medicine shows that wearing two face coverings can nearly double the effectiveness of filtering out SARS-CoV-2-sized particles, preventing them from reaching the wearer's nose and mouth and causing COVID-19. The reason for the enhanced filtration isn't so much adding layers of cloth, but eliminating any gaps or poor-fitting areas of a mask.

"The medical procedure masks are designed to have very good filtration potential based on their material, but the way they fit our faces isn't perfect," said Emily Sickbert-Bennett, PhD, associate professor of infectious diseases at the UNC School of Medicine and lead author of the study.

To test the fitted filtration efficiency (FFE) of a range of masks, UNC researchers worked with James Samet, PhD, and colleagues in the USEPA Human Studies Facility on the campus of UNC-Chapel Hill. There they filled a 10-foot by 10-foot stainless-steel exposure chamber with small salt particle aerosols, and had researchers don combinations of masks to test how effective they were at keeping particles out of their breathing space.

Each individual mask or layered mask combination was fitted with a metal sample port, which was attached to tubing in the exposure chamber that measured the concentration of particles entering the breathing space underneath the researcher's mask. A second tube measured the ambient concentration of particles in the chamber. By measuring particle concentration in the breathing space underneath the mask compared to that in the chamber, researchers determined the FFE.

"We also had the researchers in the chamber undergo a series of range-of-motion activities to simulate the typical motions a person may do throughout their day — bending at the waist, talking, and looking left, right, up and down," said Phillip Clapp, PhD, an inhalation toxicologist in the UNC School of Medicine who has been testing mask FFE with Sickbert-Bennett since the



pandemic began. According to their findings, the baseline fitted filtration efficiency (FFE) of a mask differs person to person, due to each person's unique face and mask fit. But generally, a procedure mask without altering the fit, is about 40-60% effective at keeping COVID-19-sized particles out.

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A cloth mask is about 40% effective.

Their recent findings on doubling of face masks, shows that when a cloth mask is placed over a surgical mask, the FFE improved by about 20%, and improved even more with a snug-fitting, sleeve-type mask, such

When layered over procedure masks, cloth masks improve fit by eliminating gaps and holding the procedure mask closer to the face, consistently covering the nose and mouth. When a procedure mask is worn over a cloth mask, FFE improved by 16%

as a gaiter. When layered over procedure masks, cloth masks improve fit by eliminating gaps and holding the procedure mask closer to the face, consistently covering the nose and mouth. When a procedure mask is worn over a cloth mask, FFE improved by 16%.

"We've found that wearing two loosely fitted masks will not give you the filtration benefit that one, snug-fitting procedure mask will," Sickbert-Bennett said. "And with the current data supporting how effective mask-wearing is at preventing the spread of COVID-19, the best kind of double-masking is when you and the person you are interacting with are each correctly wearing a very snug-fitting mask."

Science Tech Daily

What you need to know about pulse oximeters

DIVYA KALA BHAVANI

People with COVID-19 often need oxygenation support, so this tool, a staple for many doctors, has become something of a necessity for the layperson. Oximeters have been flying off the shelves for many households' first aid kits, largely because they are non-invasive, low-cost, easy to use, and effective at detecting hypoxemia (low blood oxygen levels).

Back when TikTok reigned strong in India, there were hundreds of videos of people showing that wearing a mask did not inhibit oxygen saturation. One user Emily Lyons, who has moderate persistent asthma, recorded herself wearing a spectrum of masks — from a reusable fabric mask to a P100 mask — and tested her oxygen levels by clipping a pulse oximeter to her index finger. The oxygen reading on the device wavered between 98 and 99.

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Device must-know's

It comprises a monitor which contains the batteries and display; a probe, which consists of light emitting diodes or LEDs and a light detector called a photo-detector. This probe senses the user's pulse.

There are two important readings: the pulse rate, recorded as beats per



minute (60 to 100 is the safe range); and the oxygen saturation of haemoglobin in arterial blood, the reading of which is recorded as SpO2). Normal readings range from 95% to 100%; anything less, and the user should get medical assistance from

a doctor. If your oximeter has alarms, atypical readings will set them off.

The mechanism clips onto the user's forefinger, though some oximeters have been known to be clipped onto one's big toe or even the ear, depending on the model.

According to the World Health Organization's Pulse Oximetry Training Manual, one must use the oximeter with patience. Once clipped on, it requires about 10 seconds to get an accurate reading.

A pulmonologist based in Jaipur and chief editor of Lung India, Dr Virendra Singh points out that pulse oximeters are not COVID-19 detectors. He states, one cannot use the pulse oximeter as a sole detector for any respiratory issues. It is only meant to give readings for a small time interval.

When buying an oximeter, do be wary of the brand names. There are oximeters selling on e-commerce platforms that will work for a month at most before giving out, and may cost as much as about 2,000.

We'd suggest going to your pharmacy. Most Indian pharmacies have partnered with legitimate names in the medical device sub-industry to provide cost-effective and reliable pulse oximeters. Those who want to support India-made pulse oximeters can look to Ambitech, Oxysat, or Home Medix, among other names.

The Hindu

Here's how you can help reduce exhaustion from video conferences

Agencies

The findings of a new study suggest that videoconferences might be less exhausting if participants feel some sense of group belonging. The study found that being on video didn't have an impact on feelings of fatigue. As remote work and the use of videoconferences have dramatically increased during the coronavirus pandemic, more people are fatigued from meeting through computer screens instead of in person. The research was published online in the Journal of Applied Psychology.

In this study, 55 employees in various fields in the United States were surveyed about their feelings about videoconferences. The researchers thought longer meetings and being on video would cause the most fatigue, but their findings surprised them, said lead researcher Andrew Bennett, PhD, an assistant professor at Old Dominion University. "We expected that aspects of being on video would be related to fatigue, such as watching everyone's faces closely on a screen or even watching yourself, but we didn't find this to be true in our study. Longer meetings also didn't impact fatigue," Bennett said. "However, the importance of feeling a sense of belonging or connection with the group really minimized fatigue after a videoconference."

Bennett's team decided to study videoconference fatigue, or "Zoom fatigue," because they all felt exhausted after their first videoconferences together when they began working remotely during the early days of the pandemic. The study participants received nine hourly surveys every day for five consecutive working days last year. Out of the surveys sent, participants completed more than 1,700 surveys and participated in an average of five to six videoconferences during the week. The majority of participants were male (58 per cent) and white (73 per cent) with an average age of 33.

One participant said videoconferences "can



be taxing on the mind and spirit," while another was "tired of being in them" and "extra tired after being in them." Only 7 per cent of the participants didn't report any signs of videoconference fatigue. Watching oneself on a webcam or turning the webcam off had no statistically significant impacts on post-meeting fatigue, the study found. Participants reported conflicting feelings about using the webcam, with some saying it was exhausting always to be staring at the screen while others felt it was impersonal when participants switched off their webcams.

"Everyone just wants to get in and get out, log in and log off," one participant reported. "There's very little chatter before and after the meeting like there would be in real life." That chatter may help build a sense of group belonging, which had a marked effect in reducing videoconference fatigue, the researchers said. There also appeared to be a sweet spot in the early afternoon when vid-

eoconferences caused less fatigue than at other times of the day.

Based on their findings, the researchers made some recommendations to help reduce videoconference fatigue: Hold videoconferences in the early afternoon.

Enhance perceptions of group belongingness, including time for small talk before or after the meeting or breakout rooms where people could talk about their interests (sports, movies, etc.). Establish basic meeting rules, such as whether to keep webcams on and refraining from doing other work.

Take breaks by looking away from the screen, standing up, and walking around. "We know videoconferences are helpful," Bennett said. "We get more emotional and nonverbal information from them, but that doesn't mean everything needs to be done in a videoconference. Sometimes a phone call or email is more effective and efficient."

Research finds autism develops differently in girls than boys

Agencies

The findings of a new study shed light on how autism spectrum disorder (ASD) manifests in the brains of girls. This prompted scientists to warn that conclusions drawn from studies conducted primarily on boys should not be assumed to hold true for girls.

The research published in the journal Brain discovered that there is a significant difference in the genes and "genetic burden" that underpin the condition in girls and boys. They also identified specific ways the brains of girls with ASD respond differently to social cues such as facial expressions and gestures than do those of girls without ASD.

"This new study provides us with a roadmap for understanding how to better match current and future evidence-based interventions to the

underlying brain and genetic profiles so that we can get the right treatment to the right individual," said lead investigator Kevin Pelphrey, PhD, a top autism expert at the University of Virginia School of Medicine and UVA's Brain Institute.

Pelphrey added, "This advances our understanding of autism broadly by revealing that there may well be different causes for boys vs. girls; this helps us understanding the heterogeneity within and across genders."

Understanding Autism-Spectrum Disorder

The new insights come from a sweeping research project, led by Pelphrey at UVA, that brings together expertise from Yale; Harvard; University of California, Los Angeles; Children's National; University of Colorado, Denver; and Seattle Children's. At UVA, key players included both Pelphrey, of the School of Medi-

cine's Department of Neurology and the Curry School of Education and Human Development, and John D. Van Horn, PhD, of the School of Data Science and UVA's Department of Psychology.

The research combined cutting-edge brain imaging with genetic research to better understand ASD's effects in girls. Those effects have remained poorly explored because the condition is four times more common in boys.

Pelphrey and colleagues used functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to examine brain activity during social interactions. They found that autistic girls used different sections of their brains than girls who did not have ASD. And, most surprisingly, the difference between girls with and without autism was not the same as the difference in the brain seen when comparing boys with and without autism, revealing different brain mecha-

nisms at play in autism depending on a person's gender.

Likewise, the underlying genetic contributors were quite different, the researchers found. Girls had much larger numbers of rare variants of genes active during the early development of a brain region known as the striatum. This suggests that the effects on the striatum may contribute to ASD risk in girls. (Scientists believe a section of the striatum called the putamen is involved in interpreting both social interaction and language.)

"The convergence of the brain imaging and genetic data provides us with an important new insight into the causes of autism in girls," Pelphrey said. "We hope that by working with our colleagues in UVA's Supporting Transformative Autism Research (STAR), we will be able to leverage our findings to generate new treatment strategies tailored to autistic girls."

Heart health of shift workers linked to body clock: Study

AGENCIES

Working hours that deviate from an individual's natural body clock are associated with greater cardiovascular risk, according to a new research. The research was presented at ESC Preventive Cardiology 2021, an online scientific congress of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC).

"Our study found that for each hour the work schedule was out of sync with an employee's body clock, the risk of heart disease got worse," said study author Dr Sara Gamboa Madeira of the University of Lisbon, Portugal.

At least 20 per cent of European employees work atypical hours or shifts, and growing scientific evidence associates these with deleterious cardiovascular outcomes. A number of explanations have been proposed, including sleep disruption and unhealthy behaviours. This study focused on the role of circadian misalignment, which is the difference between the "social clock" (e.g. work schedules) and the individual "biological clock".

Dr Gamboa Madeira explained, "We all have an internal biological clock which ranges from morning types (larks), who feel alert and productive in the early morning and sleepy in the evening, to late types (owls), for whom the opposite is true - with most of the population falling in between. Circadian misalignment occurs when there is a mismatch between what your body wants (e.g. to fall asleep at 10pm) and what your social obligations impose on you (e.g. work until midnight)."

The study included 301 blue collar workers, all performing manual picking activity in the distribution warehouses of a retail company in Portugal. Staff always worked either early morning (6am-3pm), late evening (3pm-midnight), or night (9pm-6am) shifts. Participants completed a questionnaire on sociodemographic factors (age, sex, education), occupational factors (work schedule, seniority), and lifestyle factors and had their blood pressure and cholesterol measured.

The Munich ChronoType Questionnaire was used to assess sleep duration, and to estimate each individual's internal

biological clock (also called chronotype). It was also used to quantify the amount of circadian misalignment (i.e. the mismatch between an individual's biological clock and working hours) - referred to as social jetlag. Participants were divided into three groups according to hours of social jetlag: 2 hours or less, 2-4 hours, 4 hours or more.

The researchers used the European relative risk SCORE chart which incorporates smoking, blood pressure and cholesterol to calculate relative cardiovascular risk. Relative risk ranges from 1 (non-smoker with healthy blood pressure and cholesterol) to 12 (smoker with very high blood pressure and cholesterol). In this study, a relative risk of 3 or more was considered "high cardiovascular risk". The researchers then investigated the association between social jetlag and high cardiovascular risk.

The average age of participants was 33 years and 56 per cent were men. Just over half (51 per cent) were smokers, 49 per cent had high cholesterol, and 10 per cent had hypertension. One in five (20 per cent) were classified as high cardiovascular risk. Some 40 per cent had a short sleep duration on workdays (6 hours or less). The average social jetlag was nearly 2 hours. In most workers (59 per cent), social jetlag was 2 hours or less, while for 33 per cent of staff it was 2-4 hours, and in 8 per cent it was 4 hours or more.

A higher level of social jetlag was significantly associated with greater odds of being in the high cardiovascular risk group. The odds of being classified high cardiovascular risk increased by 31 per cent for each additional hour of social jetlag, even after adjusting for sociodemographic, occupational, lifestyle, and sleep characteristics and body mass index.

Dr Gamboa Madeira said, "These results add to the growing evidence that circadian misalignment may explain, at least in part, the association found between shift work and detrimental health outcomes. The findings suggest that staff with atypical work schedules may need closer monitoring for heart health. Longitudinal studies are needed to investigate whether late chronotypes cope better with late/night shifts and earlier chronotypes to early morning schedules, both psychologically and physiologically."

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR NOTICE



Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri : Shakeel Ahmad Dar S/o: Ali Mohammad Dar R/o: Charai sharif Budgam (Transferor) of LMV Grand i 10. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04D-0384. Chasis number 20846 Engine no. 69176 Model 2015. in favour of Shri.. Malik Mohammad Saleem S/o. Abdul Rahim Malik R/o Soibugh Budgam (Transferee) as well as HPA Cancellation with HDFC Bank B/U Hari Singh High



Street Sgr.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer.

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.335
Dated 20/04/2021

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

mcb

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

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

Subject: Provisional Select list of candidates for admission to B. Pharmacy Courses 2020 at Prabha Harjilal College of Pharmacy & Preclinical Sciences Madre-e-Meharban Campus of Health Sciences Jammu; Second list thereof.

**Reference: (i) Notification No 049-BOPEE of 2020 Dated 02-04-2021
(ii) Notification No 051-BOPEE of 2021 Dated 07-04-2021**

**Notification No. 057-BOPEE of 2021
Dated 17-04-2021**

Consequent upon receipt of shortfall from Prabha Harjilal College of Pharmacy & Preclinical Sciences Madre-e-Meharban Campus of Health Sciences Jammu after the last date of joining of candidates pursuant to Notification No. 051-BOPEE of 2021 Dated 07-04-2021, the candidates figuring in Annexure "A" to this Notification have been provisionally recommended for admission to B. Pharmacy Course-2020 at Prabha Harjilal College of Pharmacy & Preclinical Sciences Madre-e-Meharban Campus of Health Sciences Jammu.

The provisionally selected candidates are advised to report to the College for admission along with following documents w.e.f 19-04-2021 to 27-04-2021 upto (03:00 P.M.)::-

1. Domicile Certificate,
2. Marks Card of 12th class examination with PCB/PCM.
3. DOB Certificate,
4. Any other documents as required by the concerned Colleges.

The Principal of the concerned College shall get above mentioned original certificates of the concerned candidates verified by the Incharge College Admission Committee & countersigned by him/her before allowing the candidates to complete their admission formalities.

The candidates provisionally selected in Waiting List shall report to the College for admission on 28-04-2021 at 10:30 A.M. only. The Principal of the concerned College shall allow these candidates to complete their admission formalities in case of any shortfall on that day.

The College shall submit SHORTFALL of candidates, if any, who did not complete their admission formalities, to BOPEE office Jammu/Srinagar on 28-04-2021 (upto 05:00 P.M.).

The Annexure "A" shall be available on the BOPEE website www.ikbpoee.gov.in.
E.&O.E.

No: BOPEE/Adm-02/2013
Dated: 17-04-2021

DIPK-NB-372/21

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

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR NOTICE



Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one. Shri : Sajad Ahmad Rather S/o: Ghulam Hassan Rather R/o: Check Fatehpura Ganderbal (Transferor) of LMV Santro. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04A - 5519. Chasis number 83398 Engine no. 976447 Model 2006. in favour of Shri.. Sajad Ahmad Ganie S/o. Ghulam Mohammad Ganie R/o Kenihama B.K. Pora (Transferee)



Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 7 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper Kashmir Observer.

Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.348
Dated 20/04/2021 mcb

J&K Small Scale Industries Development Corporation Limited (SICOP) (A J&K Government Undertaking)

Corporate Office: Jawahar Lal Nehru Udyog Bhawan, Railhead Complex Jammu/ Sanat Ghar Srinagar

Bid Number: GEM/2021/B/1178702
Dated: 19-04-2021

For and on behalf of the Jammu & Kashmir Small Scale Industries Development Corporation Limited, online bids are invited from bidders for hiring of consultancy services for implementation of BRAP under Ease of Doing Business. The bids shall be deposited in electronic format on website <https://gem.gov.in/> from 19-04-2021 (1600 hrs) up to 10-05-2021 04:00 PM only.

Sd/

Incharge (IT)
SICOP

DIPK-NB-382/21

از عدالت دسترکٹ جج صاحب سوپر با اجلاس اعجاز احمد جان

اشتبہار برادر گاہی ہر خاص و عام

Gulshana Begum W/O Lt Gh Din Gojree 2. Ashiq Hussain 3 Abid Hussain S's/O Late Gh Din Gojree 4 Rukhsana Akhter Shakeel D/O Lt Gh Din Gojree R's/O Hathishah Sopore A/P Krankshivan Colony Sopore

V/S Public At Large

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سالکان نے ایک درخواست نسبت جانشینی سرٹیفکیٹ بابت حصول رقم/721476 بحق سالکان پیش کی ہے۔ لہذا ہر خاص و عام کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی سرٹیفکیٹ مذکورہ کے اجراء کرنے میں کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا اعتراض عدالت ہڈا میں تا تاریخ 23-4-2021 عدالت ہڈا میں ذاتی طور پر پیش کرے بعد گزرنے میعاد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

Additional District Judge Sopore (KMR)

ams

از نیابت سوپور

عنوان : درخواست منجانب : شمیم بیگم زوجہ مرحوم عبدال احد ڈار ساکنہ تکیہ بل سوپور برادر اجرائی EWS سرٹیفکیٹ بحق امتیاز احد دار ولد عبدال احد ڈار معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کیا گیا مطابق رپورٹ سالک شمیم بیگم بیوہ عبدال احد ڈار ملکہ تکیہ بل سوپور کی سکوت دار ہے سالکہ کو خسرہ 932 آبادی دہ رقبہ 250 مربع فٹ ہے مکان رہائشی زیر فلیٹ ایریا 500 مربع فٹ بنتا ہے سالکہ کے پاس اس کے علاوہ اور کسی جگہ مکان رہائشی یا زرعی زمین موجود نہیں ہے سالکہ کے کمبرہ کی مہمان آمدنی 5000 روپے تک ہے اب سالکہ کا پسر امتیاز احد کو EWS سرٹیفکیٹ دیکار ہے اگر مطلوبہ سرٹیفکیٹ اجراء کرنے میں کسی شخص کو کوئی عذر یا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذر یا اعتراض دفتر ہڈا میں پیش کریں۔ میعاد گزرنے بعد کوئی بھی عذر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

نائب تحصیلدار سوپور

gms

India Does Not See Logic In U.S. Putting It On Currency Watchlist



NEW DELHI: India does not see any logic in the United States putting it on a monitoring list of currency manipulators, a trade ministry official said on Tuesday.

"I don't understand any economic logic," Anup Wadhawan, India's commerce secretary told reporters. The Reserve Bank of India is following a policy that allows currency movements based on market forces, he said.

Last week, the U.S. Treasury Department put India along with 10 other economies including Singapore, Thailand and Mexico on the "Monitoring List" that it said required

close attention to their currency practices.

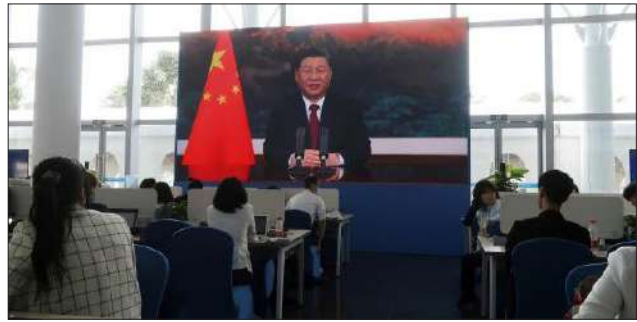
The official said India's trade surplus with the United States had gone up by nearly \$5 billion in the financial year 2020/21 that ended on March 31.

India's bilateral trade surplus in goods with the United States totalled \$24 billion in 2020, along with a services trade surplus of \$8 billion, the U.S. report said.

Indian authorities should limit foreign exchange intervention to "circumstances of disorderly market conditions, and refrain from excessive reserve accumulation," the report said, while citing higher purchases of dollars by the central bank on account of capital flows.

Some economists said the latest move by the United States to put India on the watchlist may discourage the central bank from aggressive intervention in the foreign exchange market. **(REUTERS)**

China's Xi Launches Veiled Attack On US, Warns Against Unilateralism



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday hit out at the US, saying there should be no "bossing" and "meddling" in the internal affairs of other countries as Beijing is increasingly coming under pressure from Washington and its allies over issues of human rights violations, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

"Bossing others around or meddling in others' internal affairs would not get one any support. We must advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are common values of humanity, and encourage exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations to promote the progress of human civilization," Xi said, without directly referring to the US.

"What we need in today's world is justice, not hegemony," he said addressing the annual Boao Forum for Asia (BFA), a China promoted influential think tank based in Hainan via video link.

"Big countries should behave in a manner befitting to their status and with a greater sense of responsibility," he said.

His snide remark against Washington came as US President Joe Biden vigorously pursued a strong China containment policy initiated by his predecessor by Donald Trump.

Biden united US allies like the UK, the EU and Japan over his China policy. He also held the first quadrilateral summit of the emerging alliance called Quad which included US, Australia, Japan and India.

The US, the European Union,

Britain and Canada have imposed coordinated sanctions on China over alleged human rights violations against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, a charge Beijing denied.

These countries have also taken united position on China firming up its control over Hong Kong with its new national security law subduing the massive pro-democracy agitation in the former British colony.

Those who attended BFA meeting including Apple's CEO Tim Cook, Tesla's Elon Musk, Blackstone's Stephen Schwarzman and Bridgewater's Ray Dalio, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Xi, in his address, also called on all countries in Asia and beyond to answer the "call of our times," defeat the pandemic through solidarity, strengthen global governance, and keep pursuing a community with a shared future for mankind.

Marking the 20th anniversary of the BFA, this year's annual conference is themed "A World in Change: Join Hands to Strengthen Global Governance and Advance Belt and Road Cooperation."

"Global governance should reflect the evolving political and economic landscape in the world, conform to the historical trend of peace, development and win-win cooperation, and meet the practical needs in addressing global challenges," Xi said.

On creating a future of health and security with solidarity and cooperation, Xi said the key role of the World Health Organization (WHO) must be given full play in the ongoing fight against COVID-19.

'Closure Of Economic Activity Will Lead To Permanent Closure Of Businesses'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

With varied localised restrictions being imposed across states in the wake of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, Retailers Association of India (RAI) on Tuesday said closure of economic activity at this juncture will lead to permanent closure of businesses and millions of job losses.

Stating that the retail industry is beginning to see similar issues repeating in some form that were faced last year, the retailers' body said non-essential or non-food retail and malls should be allowed to operate with strict

surveillance.

"Shutting down non-essential or non-food retail and malls is not the solution. Considering the impact of last year on business, closure of economic activity at this stage will lead to permanent closure of businesses, thereby leading to millions of job losses," RAI CEO Kumar Rajagopalan said in a statement.

Instead, he added, there is an urgent need for stricter surveillance to ensure that all rules with regards to safety and hygiene and social distancing norms are being followed by one and all. "Formal retail businesses, especially shopping centres across India have been successfully fol-

lowing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and hence should be allowed to operate with strict surveillance," he noted.

While appreciating the government's "intent behind trying to curb the second wave of the pandemic through various measures", RAI said, "however, with varied localised restrictions across states, the retail industry is beginning to see similar issues repeating in some form that were faced last year."

RAI argued that since each state/local body has interpreted the lockdown order and guidelines differently, along with malls, all other large format retail stores are facing restrictions and are being mandated closures at local levels.

It said a retail store, not located in a mall but owned by one firm/company with one GST number and single shop license or food license in case of a food business, should be considered a stand-alone store so as "to stop unnecessary and avoidable confusion in the market".

Delhi has gone for a six-day curfew from Monday evening, while Maharashtra had announced a 15-day long statewide curfew from April 14, amid a spike in coronavirus cases.

SHUTTING DOWN NON-ESSENTIAL OR NON-FOOD RETAIL and malls is not the solution. Considering the impact of last year on business, closure of economic activity at this stage will lead to permanent closure of businesses, thereby leading to millions of job losses," RAI CEO Kumar Rajagopalan said in a statement.

Need Complete Trust Between Industry, Govt To Sustain Growth Amid Covid Situation: Sitharaman

KOLKATA: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said there should be complete trust between the industry and the government to sustain growth amid the Covid situation.

Sitharaman, addressing a seminar organised by the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce and Industry here, said the Centre had taken several steps to ensure that revival of the economy continued despite a raging second wave of the pandemic.

"There should be complete trust both between the government and the industry and vice versa to sustain growth. There should not be disturbances in



the continuity, which lead to mistrust or distrust," she said.

Speaking about West Bengal, the minister said industries in the state required "oxygen" along with a globalised approach to prosper.

"Industries in the state need a lot more oxygen to flourish. The history of India was written from

Bengal...but even a signature product like the Darjeeling tea is now languishing.

"Kolkata used to shine with industries in the past, it should do so again. Bengal and its tradition have to be preserved and protected," the senior BJP leader said.

Later, talking to reporters, Sitharaman said there is no doubt that the BJP is coming to power in West Bengal, "where every sector is in need of help".

"Once the saffron power forms government in the state, funds will be provided to the farmers. Our manifesto had elaborated in detail about the revival of Bengal's economy," she added. PTI

Former Reserve Bank Governor Maidavolu Narasimham Passes Away At 94

Agencies

Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Maidavolu Narasimham, famously known as the father of Indian banking reforms, passed away on Tuesday at the age of 94.

He was born in 1927 and hailed from Mydavolu village of Guntur District in Andhra Pradesh.

Narasimham was the 13th governor of RBI and he served as the central bank head from May 2, 1977 to November 30, 1977.

Narasimham was the first and so far the only governor to be appointed from the Reserve



Bank cadre, having joined the Bank as a Research Officer in the Economic Department. He later

joined the government and prior to his appointment as governor he served as Additional Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs.

After his short term as RBI governor, he served as India's executive director at the World Bank and later at the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Narasimham also headed various committees including the one on Financial System, 1991 and the Committee of Banking Sector Reforms, 1998.

Narasimham was awarded Padma Vibhushan award in the year 2000.

India Likely To Waive Customs Duty On Covid-19 Vaccine Imports



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI: The government is likely to waive 10 per cent customs duty levied on imported vaccines in a bid to keep low the cost of overseas vaccines that are being eyed to supplement domestically made shots ahead of opening COVID-19 vaccination to all citizens over 18 years of age, sources said.

While Russia's Sputnik V vaccines are due to arrive this month or latest by next month, manufacturers like Moderna and Johnson and Johnson have been urged to seek emergency use approval in India.

The government presently levies 10 per cent customs or import duty plus a 16.5 per cent I-GST and social welfare surcharge on vaccines coming from overseas.

These taxes would make the imported vaccines costlier than the ones made by Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech. "A customs duty waiver is being considered," a source aware of the matter said.

Another source said a decision is likely to be made "very soon." The government earlier this month allowed emergency use of imported vaccines to curb spread of coronavirus

infections.

With 2.59 lakh new infections, the caseload has crossed 1.53 crore, making India the second-worst affected nation after the US, which has reported more than 3.1 crore infections.

India's deaths from COVID-19 rose by a record 1,761 to over 1.8 lakh. Sources said discussion on duty exemption on vaccines started sometime in December last year when overseas manufacturers such as Pfizer sought approval to supply its vaccines to India.

The finance ministry and its indirect tax collection arm had done some preliminary calculations on the implications of a duty waiver but a decision was put off until the government approved use of imported vaccines, they said.

The government, which on Monday allowed citizens over the age of 18 years to receive COVID-19 vaccinations "from May 1, currently regulates the sale and purchase of all Covid shots in the country.

Under the third phase of its vaccination strategy, manufacturers will be required to supply 50 per cent of their monthly doses to the government and the rest to state governments or the open market.

Less Than Four Percent Indian Farmers Adopted Sustainable Agricultural Practices, Says Study

Less than 4 per cent of Indian farmers have adopted sustainable agricultural practices and systems, according to a study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW). The study, supported by the Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU), found that scaling up sustainable agriculture would be critical to improve farm incomes and bolster India's nutrition security in a climate-constrained future. States such as Andhra Pradesh and Sikkim have already taken a lead in sustainable agriculture.

Speaking about sustainable agriculture, NITI-Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar said: "Embracing sustainable agriculture could not only lead to better incomes for farmers but also have multiple environmental benefits."

There is a need to rethink current agricultural practices, he said, and added, "Our focus is on promoting sustainable agriculture, especially natural farming, in India. This would benefit small and marginal farmers."

It is also suitable in drier regions of the country as it requires lesser water, he said in a statement.

Asserting that India needs mainstream sustainable agriculture, CEEW CEO Arunabha Ghosh said, "We need a fundamental rethink of how we grow food and what we eat."



Sustaining agriculture has the potential to help diversify farmers' sources of food and income, make farming climate-resilient, optimise use of natural resources and rebuild ecosystems. It also offers a vital alternative to input-intensive farming, he said.

"We must investigate more and follow the science," he said and noted that for sustainable agriculture to scale, policymakers must support long-term comparative assessments of sustainable practices and conventional farming, and increase budgetary allocation to promote practices and methods that have the most promise.

According to the CEEW study, organic farming has garnered the most policy attention among the eight sustainable agricultural practices receiving budgetary support under various central government programmes.

However, it currently covers only 2.8 million hectares (ha) - or two per cent of India's net sown area of 140 million ha. **PTI**

SHORT TAKES

Cyber Agency Asks Indian FB Users To Enhance Account Privacy After Global Data Leak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The country's cyber security agency CERT-In has advised Facebook users to strengthen their account privacy settings after a recent global "data scraping" incident in the social media platform affected about 61 lakh Indians.

"As the Facebook platform evolves and grows, parts of your account could be public. Data could also be collected and shared in ways you don't know about," the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team or CERT-In said in a public advisory issued on Monday.

It is the federal technology arm to combat cyber attacks and guard the Indian cyber space against phishing



and hacking assaults and similar online attacks.

"It has been reported that globally there has been a large scale leakage of Facebook profile information. The exposed information includes email addresses, profile ID, full name, job occupation, phone numbers and birth date.

"According to Facebook, the scraped information does not include financial information, health infor-

mation or passwords, however information from more than 450 million unique Facebook profiles globally, including approximately 61 lakh Indian individuals, has been made publicly available in multiple cyber criminal forums for free," the advisory said while explaining the breach.

A cyber security expert had spoken about this online leak earlier this month, which was acknowledged by the company, stating that "this is old data that was previously reported on in 2019. We found and fixed this issue in August 2019".

The CERT-In said that Facebook has claimed that this "data scraping" happened by using the "contact importer" feature of the platform, which allows users to find other us-

ers by using their phone numbers.

"Facebook stated that this feature was changed in September 2019, following the discovery that threat actors were abusing the feature. However, while Facebook modified the feature in 2019 to thwart this kind of abuse, the phone numbers of 450 million global users had already been harvested by malicious actors, along with other identifying information on users," it said.

Dejargonising the term "data scraping", the advisory said it refers to the process of using automated software or scripts to harvest public information from sites, such as any information users make publicly available in their profiles like names, city, occupation, among others.

Bajaj Launches Pulsar NS 125 At Rs 93,690



Bajaj Auto on Tuesday launched its new Pulsar NS 125 motorcycle priced at Rs 93,690 (ex-showroom Delhi). The Pulsar NS 125 is powered by

a 4-valve 125cc BS-VI DTS-i engine, delivering 12 PS of power and a peak torque of 11 Nm. The bike comes with 'Nitrox' mono-shock absorbers offering stability even at high speeds, the company said in a statement.

Unlike the Pulsar 200NS, which shares an engine with KTM Duke 200, the 125NS engine is based on the Pulsar 125 - not that of the KTM Duke 125, which sells for Rs 1.62 lakh.

While the Pulsar 125 resembles the standard Pulsar 150 and 180 series motorcycles, visually, the Pulsar NS 125 takes cues from the Pulsar 135 LS, which was discontinued in 2018. The company is targeting first-time sport biking enthusiasts with its NS 125 model. In August 2019, it

launched the Pulsar 125, which was then its smallest-capacity motorcycle in the Pulsar lineup.

Commenting on the launch, Bajaj Auto President-Motorcycles Sarang Kanade said, "The thrill that the new Pulsar NS 125 is built to offer, will appeal to a large segment of customers with its multiple class-leading features. The Pulsar 125 has been very well received by consumers and we are confident that the new NS 125 will further strengthen the brand's position in the Entry Sport Bike segment."

Bajaj Auto offers the Pulsar NS series, including the NS 200 and NS 160, in the highly competitive entry sports segment.

With inputs from PTI

HC Lays Down Guidelines For Ensuring Quick Removal Of Offensive Content From Internet

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday laid down guidelines to be followed by courts while dealing with cases related to removal of objectionable content from the internet to ensure access to such offensive material is restricted at the earliest and it is not re-posted anywhere else by others.

The guidelines or template of directions were laid down by Justice A J Bhambhani while dealing with a matter in which a woman's photographs were uploaded on a pornographic website by some miscreants and despite court orders the content could not be removed in entirety from the world-wide-web and "errant parties merrily continued" to re-post and re-direct the same to other sites.

The court directed the police to ensure the offending content was removed and directions were also issued to search engines, like Google, Yahoo and Bing, "to globally de-index and de-reference" the offending content from their search results.

It directed search engines to endeavour to use automated tools, to proactively identify and globally disable access to any content which is exactly identical to the offending content, that may appear on any other websites/online platforms

"The internet never sleeps and the



internet never forgets," the court said referring to the case and added that it cannot resign itself to "a cat-and-mouse game of errant parties evading orders by re-posting offending content across the world-wide-web, in an act of defiance and contumacy".

According to the template of directions, when such a matter comes before a court and it is satisfied that an immediate redressal was required at the interim stage, it may issue a direction to the website where the offending content is hosted to remove the same forthwith and maximum within 24 hours of receiving the judicial order.

"A direction should also be issued to the website or online platform on which the offending content is hosted to preserve all information and associated records relating to the offending content, so that evidence in relation to the offending content is

not vitiated, at least for a period of 180 days or such longer period as the court may direct, for use in investigation," the court said.

It said a direction should be issued to the search engine(s) to disabled access to the offending content by 'de-indexing' and 'dereferencing' it in their listed search results and the intermediary ought to comply with such a direction within 24 hours of receiving the same.

"The directions issued must also mandate the concerned intermediaries, whether websites/online platforms/search engine(s), to endeavour to employ pro-active monitoring by using automated tools, to identify and remove or disable access to any content which is exactly identical to the offending content that is subject matter of the court order," it said.

It said for an order directing the removal or access disablement of

offending content to be effective even within India, a search engine must block the search results throughout the world since no purpose would be served by issuing such an order if it has no realistic prospect of preventing irreparable harm to a litigant. The court said search engines are already employing requisite automated tools to prevent generating links to child pornography and hate speech, which tools can equally well be used in making a court order, such as the one in the present case, implementable and effective.

"None of this would impose upon the website, online platform or search engine(s) any obligation to generally monitor content or to adjudicate the illegitimacy of any content or operate as a prior restraint or a blanket ban or censorship of content generally," it said.

The guidelines said directions should be issued to the law enforcement agencies to obtain, within 72 hours, from the concerned website all information and associated records, relating to the offending content.

It said aggrieved party should also be permitted, on the strength of a court order, to notify the law enforcement agency to remove offending content from any other website, online platform or search engine(s) on which same or similar offending content is found to be appearing.

"Upon such notification by the

aggrieved party, the law enforcement agency shall notify the concerned website, online platform and search engine(s), who would be obligated to comply with such request..

"..and, if there is any technological difficulty or other objection to so comply, the website, online platform or search engine(s) may approach the concerned court which passed the order, seeking clarification but only after first complying with the request made by the aggrieved party," the court said.

It said if an intermediary fails to fulfil the conditionalities and obligations cast upon it, it was liable to forfeit the exemption from liability available to it under the Information Technology (IT) Act. In the instant case, it said posting of photographs in a pornographic site prima facie amounts to an offence under the IT Act and directed the petitioner to furnish in writing to the Investigating Officer, of the FIR lodged on her complaint, all available information relating to the offending content within 24 hours of receiving the instant judgment, if not already done so.

"The Delhi Police are directed to remove/disable access to the offending content, the Web URL and Image URL of which would be furnished by the petitioner as above, from all websites and online platforms, forthwith and in any event within 24 hours of receipt of information from the petitioner. PTI

PDP Slams Govt Over Detention Of Party Leaders

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Tuesday hit out at the Centre for the alleged inhuman and illegal incarceration of senior party leaders and other political prisoners in and outside Kashmir.

"Notwithstanding the fact that the detention of top party leaders including Mohammad Sartaj Madni and Naem Akhter is illegal in the first place, the government has given up even on the basic pretence of empathy and humanism when it comes to political prisoners of J&K even in the holy month of Ramzan," PDP general secretary G N Lone Hanjura said.

While the coronavirus pandemic is wreaking havoc across the country and is consuming lives in an unprecedented manner, one fails to understand "what pleasure is the government deriving out of continuous detention of the two elderly leaders suffering from underlying health issues", he said.

Hanjura said it was ironic that the Centre is mending relations with its neighbours while it continues to deal with its own people as "enemies".

"It is high time that the government gives up on its vindictive approach towards the leadership of J&K and course corrects its decisions. Immediate release of all the political prisoners and those being held under detentions on other frivolous charges, including PDP youth president Waheed ur Rehman Parra would be a good start, he said.

COVID: Govt waives import duty on Remdesivir, its APIs

NEW DELHI: Amid surging COVID-19 cases in the country, the government on Tuesday waived customs duty on Remdesivir, its raw materials and other components used to make the antiviral drug.

The move would help augment domestic availability and reduce cost of the injection.

Remdesivir is being used in the treatment of coronavirus.

In a notification, the Department of Revenue said "the central government, on being satisfied that it is necessary in the public interest to do, hereby exempts the goods..when imported into India, from the whole of the duty of customs leviable".

The items on which the duty has been waived include Remdesivir active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), injection Remdesivir, and beta Cyclodextrin used in manufacture of Remdesivir.

This import duty exemption would remain in force till October 31 this year.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal tweeted, "In line with PM @NarendraModi's priority to ensure affordable medical care for COVID-19 patients, imports of Remdesivir API, injection and specific inputs have been made import duty free. This should increase supply and

reduce cost thus providing relief to patients."

Earlier on April 11, in view of increased demand for Remdesivir, the Centre banned export of the injection and its APIs till the situation improves. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) had last week said various drug companies had cut the prices of Remdesivir injection on the intervention of the government.

Cadila Healthcare has reduced the price of its REMDAC (Remdesivir 100 mg) injection to Rs 899 from Rs 2,800.

Similarly, Syngene International has cut the price of its brand

RemWin to Rs 2,450 from Rs 3,950.

Hyderabad-based Dr Reddy's Laboratories has cut the price of REDYX, which used to cost Rs 5,400, to Rs 2,700 now. Similarly, Cipla has reduced the price of its CIPREMI brand to Rs 3,000 from Rs 4,000.

Mylan has also reduced the price of its brand from Rs 4,800 to Rs 3,400. Similarly, Jubilant Generics has cut the price of its Remdesivir brand to Rs 3,400 from Rs 4,700 earlier.

Hetero Healthcare has cut the price of its brand COVIFOR from Rs 5,400 to Rs 3,490.

Bajrang Dal Activists Create Ruckus Outside Court Over 'Love Jihad'

Press Trust of India

BAREILLY: Members of the Bajrang Dal on Tuesday created a ruckus outside a court here, when a minor girl turned up there allegedly for a court marriage with a man from another community.

The activists of the right-wing group claimed that they had gathered there to oppose a court marriage on the basis of "forged papers", showing the girl as a

Muslim.

They called it an incident of "love jihad", a reference to the allegations that Hindu women are being duped into marriages with Muslim men for sake of conversion.

The man fled from there as police detained his parents and the girl.

Police said they have called the girl's brother who lives in Delhi's Badarpur.

The girl had left her brother's place a few days

ago, after which the family lodged a complaint that she was "missing".

"The missing report of the girl has been registered in Delhi. She will be handed over to the Delhi Police when they arrive here. More facts about the girl are being gathered," said Chhavi Singh, Inspector at the local women police station.

According to the girl's brother, she is around 15-year-old, police said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Centre Rules

and said all stakeholders were working collectively to meet this challenge.

The situation is different from last year when there was no COVID vaccine in the country or infrastructure to produce PPE kits and other much-needed medical goods, he noted.

He said lockdown should be the last option and focus should be on micro-containment.

"If we all follow COVID-19 protocols, there'll be no need to impose lockdowns," Modi said.

He urged the people to reduce their movement and take vaccination.

Corona Surge Cause

Pandurang K Pole also said the number of active coronavirus cases is expected to rise as the second wave of COVID-19 has set in Kashmir. He appealed to people to observe COVID-appropriate behaviour to prevent the spread of virus.

"The rising number of COVID-19 cases is a cause of concern. But the situation does not require imposition of a lockdown yet," Pole told reporters here.

He said sufficient bed capacity and oxygen supply are available at hospitals as a number of new oxygen generation plants have been installed at various health facilities to meet any emergency situation.

There has been a sharp increase in active COVID-19 cases in the Valley from around 600 in the middle of March to nearly 8,000 as on date.

He said the government has taken various measures to contain the spread of the virus, but it has now become imperative for all to follow the SOPs in letter and spirit as a shared responsibility.

He said people should avoid going to public places and busy markets unless extremely necessary, besides wearing a face mask and maintaining social distance, ensuring hand hygiene, and isolation in case of coming in contact with a COVID positive person.

The official emphasized that people should come forward for vaccination against COVID-19 as this is the best safeguard against the deadly infection.

Pole said a slew of measures has been taken including rigorous testing in the Valley.

He said 2.81 lakh COVID-19 tests have been conducted till date while more than 7.5 lakh people in Kashmir have received the vaccine against coronavirus.

Next 3 Weeks

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan.

After a detailed discussion on various issues relating to COVID, the Union home secretary asked the officials to maintain constant vigilance against the grave situation in union territories, according to an official statement.

It said strict enforcement of COVID-appropriate behaviour was stressed along with stricter enforcement of movement restrictions and prohibition of large gatherings, regulated timings for markets etc.

Bhalla advised the union territories to increase RT-PCR testing along with use of RAT for screening in clusters.

The central officials strongly recommended

urgent review of clinical management.

Expressing concern over the worrying scenario, Member (Health) NITI Aayog V K Paul pointed out the criticality of the next three weeks for COVID response measures.

The UT administrators were advised to plan in advance for three weeks, the statement said.

At the meeting, the central government officials reviewed the COVID status, its management and response strategies with the chief secretaries of the union territories.

The home secretary pointed out the steep growth in number of cases all across the country.

From 20,000 cases on January 1, India has been registering almost 10 times more cases -- over 2,00,000 -- daily since April 15.

In last 11 days, new cases have almost doubled from 1.31 lakh reported on April 9 to 2.73 lakh on April 20.

Through a detailed and comprehensive presentation, the current trajectory of total new COVID-19 cases, weekly tests, weekly positivity rate, weekly new COVID cases, weekly number of deaths, and the status and proportion of RT-PCR tests and Rapid Antigen Tests in all the union territories were discussed.

The UTs shared their current efforts for containment and management of the disease.

Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Lakshadweep pointed to the rise in cases due to large number of inbound travellers.

Lakshadweep has seen a sudden spike after April 14, primarily due to the travel of a large number of people to the mainland to shop for festive occasions.

Most UTs have imposed movement restrictions, including night curfew and curbs on intra-island movement in case of island UTs.

The Chandigarh administration informed that it was conducting door-to-door counselling for increased vaccination.

A total of 90 per cent of the patients are in home-isolation and are being monitored by mobile teams, it said.

The UT of Delhi discussed shortage of beds and the current efforts to augment this using central government infrastructure and support through the DRDO's recently operationalised COVID hospital, the statement said.

The Delhi government expressed gratitude for the timely support of the Union government for augmenting its hospital bed capacity during last year and this year, it said.

Their efforts to ramp up testing and reduce the turnaround time for the test results were also outlined.

A survey to promptly identify COVID-positive people should be taken up, Bhalla said.

He stressed on planning even the minutest details of COVID management.

For the UT of Ladakh, he recommended regulation of incoming labourers and supervised containment. Islands can be made large containment zones, he suggested.

The union home secretary assured of continued and full support of the government of India for all efforts of the UTs in containment and management of COVID-19.

The meeting, held through video-conference, was also attended by Balram Bhargava,

Director General of the ICMR.

The director generals of police of all the UTs were also in attendance.

J&K Logs Highest

now stands at 13,470, while 1,34,697 patients have recovered so far, the officials said.

Night Curfew

and guidelines related to the curfew were announced by the Lieutenant Governor's office in a series of tweets.

"The night curfew shall be extended to all municipal and urban local body limits of all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir. It was already in force in eight districts earlier, from 10 pm to 6 am," the LG office tweeted.

It also said that public transport (matadors/mini-buses/buses) shall be permitted to ply only at 50 per cent of its authorised seating capacity. The district superintendents of police shall ensure compliance to this effect, it added.

"Only 50 per cent shops in market complexes/bazaars/malls within the municipal limits/urban local body limits shall be open on an alternate basis through a rotation system," it said in another tweet.

It directed all the district magistrates to devise a mechanism to implement this, "preferably in consultation with local market associations", PTI

J&K Has Adequate

sufficient oxygen stock was made by Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Rajan Prakash Thakur while taking stock of oxygen concentration centres, buffer stock of oxygen cylinders and availability of beds for Covid-19 patients at SK Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS), Soura, here on Tuesday.

"Adequate buffer stock of oxygen cylinders is available and people need not to panic. Not a single patient shall die for want of Oxygen in J&K," Thakur said, as per the official spokesperson.

He further said that the Principal Secretary maintained that there was no shortage of oxygen at this point. He stated that sufficient beds are available for everyone who is ill with Covid-19.

"We are ramping production for future demand and emergency. The administration has taken decision to divert oxygen from all non-medical uses to medical use in view of prevailing situation to ensure its abundant availability in all hospitals," he said, as per the official spokesperson.

He further said that the Principal Secretary also requested people to follow Covid SOPs in letter and spirit, maintain physical distance, and wear masks and not to go out without any necessary work. He also stressed on SKIMS administration to gear up entire machinery on war footing basis.

According to the official spokesperson, Thakur inspected various sections including ICU, Neuro Surgical unit, Intensive Cardiac Care unit, Department of Dietetics and Therapeutics, Central Sterile Supplies Department, Oxygen Concentrator Plant and other sections during his visit.

Director SKIMS, A G Ahangar, said the

institution has reserved 260 beds for Covid patients and 156 Covid patients are presently admitted in the hospital. He informed that the current consumption rate of oxygen at the institute is 3.93 lakhs litre per hour and additional required amount of oxygen is 1.5 lakh per hour, the official spokesperson said.

India Ranks

issues is a drop in public interest in journalism itself, the report read.

According to the report, 59 per cent of people polled in 28 countries said that journalists deliberately try to mislead the public by reporting false information.

Another Wet Spell

mercury settled at 5.0 degree Celsius at Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, against previous night's 4.8 degree Celsius and 6.5 degree Celsius normal for the area during this time of the season, the official said. Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a low of 4.5 degree Celsius against 4.8 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said.

Gulmarg, the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 1.0 degree Celsius against 0.5 degree Celsius on the previous night which was below 2.3 degree Celsius than the normal for the area, the official said. (With GNS inputs)

Landslide Blocks

reports said, left hundreds of vehicles stranded on the road stretch.

"The road clearance will take 2 to 3 more hours" a senior officer said.

Due to the road blockade, hundreds of Jammu bound trucks which were released for traffic on late night Monday from Qazigund got stuck on the highway between Ramban and Ramsoo areas, an official said.

"Besides, the scheduled passenger traffic for today from Jammu to Srinagar has also been stopped at Nagrota and Udhampur" he added.

76% Students

21,309 students got first division, 9339 secured second division, 1294 students passed the exams with third division and fifteen students qualified their additional third subject.

The figures also reveal that in the exams, at least 394 students were absent, 20 students were having dispute in eligibilities, eight were disqualified and an examination of three students was cancelled.

LG Greets People

follow the ideals of Lord Ram, and tread the path of righteousness, he added.

May the auspicious occasion of Ram Navami bring happiness, peace, and prosperity in the lives of all, besides giving us renewed strength to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, prayed the Lt Governor.

He also urged the people to observe the festivities following all SoPs and COVID-19 appropriate behaviour.

Labourer Dies After

However, he succumbed to his injuries.

"The elderly person expired soon after being

'Moeen Ali Brings All-Round Value To CSK,' Says Coach Fleming



Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Chennai Super Kings head coach Stephen Fleming feels that England player Moeen Ali has strengthened the team as he brings all-round value to it, which was missed in the last IPL season.

Fleming said Ali's impressive batting at No. 3 has been instrumental in the team getting good scores so far this season.

"He is adding an all-round aspect to our game which we lacked last year," Fleming said of Ali, who hit a quickfire 26 and returned with figures of 3/7 in CSK's 45-run win over Rajasthan Royals on Monday night.

"His contribution was just what we were looking for. We are absolutely happy with the way he has started," Fleming said at the post-match press conference.

The head coach said his team has not played "a good 20 overs with the bat" yet but still getting high scores.

"I'm really excited about the way we are playing. The long resource we have, we're using and we are pushing opposition hard. So we are playing a positive brand throughout," the former New Zealand captain said.

He said captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni would get better as he spends more time in the middle. Dhoni scored 18 off 17 balls after coming at number five.

"Yes, his form is restoring, every time he gets some balls in the middle he's going to get better and better," Fleming said.

"There will be opportunities

where we would probably look to throw MS Dhoni up as with (Ravindra) Jadeja and others."

Fleming said because of the "many resources" his team has, it's facing the challenge of managing the batting order.

"At the moment we are just trying to be a solid order and look for simple parts of the game and what the conditions provide us in terms of how we can attack.

"We know we have got a lot of batting and the way we are playing is really encouraging. We haven't put together a perfect innings by any means but the skipper will be a big part of it going forward," Fleming added.

He said the team will continue to back opener Ruturaj Gaikwad (10) despite his struggles and failing for the third straight game.

"Robin Uthappa is waiting and Ruturaj has a little bit of time last year with the way he played. You know our philosophy, we give our players a good run.

"What they want to try and do is that the intent is there, the timing is great. We'll continue to back him. We'll make a decision to change at some point. We discuss it pretty hard but at the moment backing a good young player," he added.

He said there wasn't much dew on the wicket, which was a good sign.

"The pitch was a little bit drier and there wasn't much dew, so there was plenty of opportunity in the second innings. But it isn't gonna be like that in the next game. So we are back to the drawing-room, making sure that we assess more," he added.

WTC Final To Go Ahead As Planned, Says ICC After UK Adds India To Travel 'Red List'

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council on Monday said the World Test Championship final, to be contested between India and New Zealand in Southampton from June 18, will go ahead as planned after Britain added India to travel "red list" after COVID-19 caseload surge.

India's entry into the "red list" effectively bans all travel from the country and makes a 10-day hotel quarantine compulsory for UK residents arriving back home.

However, the ICC expressed confidence in staging the WTC final in a bio-secure environment.

"The ECB and other members have demonstrated how we can stage international cricket safely in the middle of a pandemic and we are confident that we can continue to do that and that the WTC Final will go ahead as planned in June in the UK," said the ICC in a statement on Monday night.

"We are currently discussing with the UK Government the impact of countries being on the 'red list'," it added.

A BCCI source told PTI that it's difficult to say anything at this point in time and the Board is hoping that India will not be in the 'red list' by the time the team leaves for UK in early June for the WTC final.

"We still don't know how the situation will pan out in June. The travel related SOPs are always dynamic as per COVID situation.



When India leaves for UK at the start of June, it might be that the country is not in red list which requires 10 days of hard quarantine.

"But, if it is needed, it would be done. The situation is too fluid right now," the source said on conditions of anonymity.

Media reports in the UK said that in case it is required, the Rose Bowl in Southampton and it on-site hotel could be cleared for 'red list' arrivals by reverting to the full bio-secure set up that saw it successfully stage international fixtures last season.

"We are currently discussing with the government the impact of countries being on the 'red list'. By working collaboratively we demonstrated how we can stage international cricket safely in the middle of a pandemic and hope to be able to do so again this year," an

ECB spokesperson was quoted as saying by 'Guardian' newspaper.

The Indian women's cricket team is also scheduled to tour UK in June while the men's team is to play five Tests in England starting August 4.

There is also concern about how the inclusion of India in the 'red list' will impact the England and New Zealand cricketers who are currently playing in the IPL and intend to fly to the UK for the two-match Test series between the two countries that starts at the Lord's on June 2.

The IPL will conclude on May 30 with the summit clash scheduled in Ahmedabad.

India has reported 2,59,170 new positive cases in last 24 hours, the highest single-day surge, taking the country's COVID-19 caseload past the 1.5 crore mark.

'Don't Want Anyone To Say I'm Unfit,' Says CSK Skipper MS Dhoni

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Monday said it is hard to "keep up" with younger players in the squad but it will be a "big positive" for the 39-year-old if they are not able to point fingers at him over his fitness.

The 39-year-old Dhoni, who retired from international cricket last year, admitted that "getting old and being fit are two difficult things".

"When you are playing, you don't really want anyone to say he's unfit. I have to keep up with the younger guys, they are very fast, it's good to challenge them," Dhoni said after CSK beat Rajasthan Royals by 45 runs in their IPL match.

"Performances are something that's guaranteed. I wasn't guaranteeing performances when I was 24. I can't guarantee when I am 40,

but at least if people can't point finger at me that he's unfit then that will be a big positive for me."

Talking about the match, he said he was glad CSK scored 180-plus, though he said they could have got more.

"I felt Sam bowled really well. Deepak, there was a bit of miscalculation with the knuckle delivery. So I felt a good start was important. Even the wet ball was spinning.

"I don't really mind Jos playing reverse sweep. If the wet ball was turning then the chance of the dry ball turning is high."

Dhoni said it was good to have Moeen Ali, who took three wickets from seven runs from three overs, as the wicket was turning a bit and becoming more sticky.

"The first six balls I played could have cost us in another game."

He said a lot has changed since

last year when they finished seventh out of eight teams.

"The way we have prepared. The bowlers have been under the pump last year also, so they're used to the conditions."

Losing captain Sanju Samson he thought it was a good score to chase down but his side lost too many wickets in the middle overs.

"Our bowlers bowled really well, they batted too deep. 10-15 runs extra we gave down the line. We lost the match but there are a lot of positives.

"The dew didn't come and the ball was still turning, so it was a bit shocking to see.

"It's important to maintain good composure, this format demands us to score at a higher risk rate, so it's very normal to get out often. I keep working on the basics and giving myself some time at the centre."

IPL 2021, CSK VS KKR, PREVIEW

Dhoni-Led Chennai Eye Another Win Against Struggling Kolkata



Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: On a roll after back-to-back wins, the vintage Chennai Super Kings would look to extend their winning run when they clash with struggling Kolkata Knight Riders in their next IPL match here on Wednesday.

After their abject campaign in UAE last year, the CSK started the season in an ominous fashion, losing to Delhi Capitals by seven wickets in a one-sided affair.

But since then, the MS Dhoni-led side has come on its own with the 'Captain Cool' making the most of his resources at the batting-friendly Wankhede stadium.

Deepak Chahar's brilliance handed them their first win of the season against Punjab Kings it's been a tale of two Englishmen — Moeen Ali and Sam Curran for the CSK.

Explosive all-rounder Ali has embraced the number three spot with knocks of 36 from 24 (vs Delhi Capitals), 46 off 31 (Punjab Kings) and 26 off 20 in his match-winning show against Rajasthan Royals on Monday.

He is also quietly doing the job with his off-spin with Dhoni cleverly bringing him in the mix in the non-friendly conditions here.

In their chase of 189, Jos Buttler had started to look ominous and sent a good-length ball from Ravindra Jadeja into the stands as the ball had to be replaced.

Well aware that the dry ball would turn more than the dew-laden wet ball, Dhoni stepped up his attack with Jadeja and Ali from both ends.

While Jadeja dismissed the dangerous looking Buttler and Shivam Dube in one over, Ali accounted for David Miller, Riyan Parag and Chris Morris in his match-turning 3/7.

The only brightspot of their abysmal campaign in UAE, youngster

Sam Curran has also made some impact both with the bat and ball.

Be it his 15-ball 34 against a losing cause to Delhi Capitals, or his bowling in the Powerplay, Curran is giving Dhoni many options.

Against a side which will play its first match of the season at the Wankhede, smarting from two successive defeats, the Dhoni-led CSK will start as overwhelming favourites against KKR as Eoin Morgan is all set to ring in some changes to revive their campaign.

After their emphatic start against Sunrisers Hyderabad, KKR have slipped to fifth spot with defeats to Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore.

And in both the defeats, the Morgan-led side had the upper hands but could not capitalise on their starts.

Varun Chakravarthy had dismissed Virat Kohli and Rajat Patidar in five balls to have RCB in a spot with 9/2 inside two overs. But in a bizarre decision, Morgan took the mystery spinner out of the attack and brought in Shakib-Al-Hasan as Glenn Maxwell and AB de Villiers powered them to 204/4.

It remains to be seen if Morgan persists with Shakib or bring in seaming Aussie all-rounder Ben Cutting in the less spin-friendly conditions.

Morgan also has persisted with the veteran Harbhajan Singh and gave him the opening overs in all the three matches. Left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav could be a better option.

Head coach Brendon McCullum has already hinted of making some changes after their 38-run defeat to RCB.

As for CSK, opener Ruturaj Gaikwad is enduring a terrible form with scores of 5, 5 and 10 and it remains to be seen whether he is given a longer rope by Dhoni who is not known to tinker his XI much.

I'M REALLY EXCITED ABOUT THE WAY we are playing. The long resource we have, we're using and we are pushing opposition hard. So we are playing a positive brand throughout."

Sri Lanka Seek To End Winless Run In Test Format Against Bangladesh



Agencies

PALLEKELE: It's been a long time between test wins for Sri Lanka, a record coach Mickey Arthur has ensured the players are acutely aware of.

Sri Lanka will start a two-match series against Bangladesh on Wednesday, aiming for its first Test win since January 2020.

The run since then has included two losses in South Africa, two losses at home to England and two draws in the Caribbean against the West Indies.

In all six tests, Sri Lanka had its chance but let the game slip away after some costly mistakes.

A batting collapse, dropped catches, injuries and poor use of the decision referral system to review umpiring calls have been costly.

"We have spoken at length about taking that opportunity when it presents itself and applying pressure for long period until the opposition inevitably breaks," Arthur said.

"If you take the West Indies series, we were in positions where we could have dominated but they managed to wriggle out of the situations."

Sri Lanka has won 16 of its 20 cricket tests against Bangladesh and lost only once at Colombo in 2017 although three of the last eight matches have ended in a draw.

There is a nice grass cover on the

pitch and, while most expect the curator to shave it off before the test starts Wednesday, Sri Lanka seem to have changed their strategies to bank on their fast bowlers more than an inexperienced spin department.

"We will look to get pitches that do give our pacers some assistance for sure but I believe we have all bases covered and have the ability to have a balanced side with spin as well," Arthur said.

Fast bowler Lahiru Kumara and former captain Angelo Mathews are expected to return to the lineup after missing the West Indies series.

Bangladesh, meanwhile, has struggled in recent months.

There was intense criticism following a home series loss to the West Indies and a tough tour of New Zealand, where Bangladesh lost all six white ball games.

The absence of top all-rounder Shakib Al-Hasan and left-arm fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman — both unavailable because of the Indian Premier League — will also be a test of depth.

"Sri Lanka are a great team at home. It will be challenging for us," Bangladesh skipper Mominul Haque said.

"We have to take up this challenge and get a good result.

"I think it will be a competitive series. Both teams have good pace bowlers (so) batting is going to be very important."

India Set Host First Ever WBC India Championship On May 1

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: In what is being billed as a game changer for professional boxing in the country, the World Boxing Council (WBC) has endorsed the Indian Championship fight between Chandni Mehra and Suman Kumari on May 1 in Jalandhar.

The fight for the Lightweight 140lb belt is scheduled to take place as part of the LZ Promotions India Unleashed-Fight Night — the country's first ever Professional USA boxing event, according to a release.

Chandni and Suman have been India's No. 1 fighters in lightweight and featherweight categories and now will be challenging each other in this milestone-bout, aiming to become the first-ever WBC India champion across both men and women categories.

The WBC is one of the four major organisations that sanctions professional boxing bouts globally.

This is the first time ever that India will be hosting a title card sanctioned by the global body and contested by the two female fighters.

"This is a game changer for Indian professional boxing. I believed India has huge potential equally in men's and women's professional boxing. My vision is to promote India's first-ever World Boxing Champion (male and female)," said Parm Goraya, CEO of LZ Promotions and India Unleashed Promoter.

"Pawan Goyat, Pawan Maan, Asha Roka are some of the names that have fought on major platforms so a major coup to have them participate. I'm really excited to initiate this historic move and hope to contribute in creating a historic chapter for boxing and professional boxing in India.

"It's a great development for Indian professional boxing... This title card would definitely be a game changer for professional boxers as well as boxing in India," said Muralidharan Raja, president of Indian Boxing Council (IBC) which has also been recently affiliated by the Asian wing of WBC.

SA Captains Fear ICC Ban, Apex Body Says No Intervention As Of Now

Press Trust of India

JOHANNESBURG: The ICC on Tuesday said it will not intervene in the governance crisis engulfing South African cricket till the country's board asks for it, after the three national team captains expressed concerns over possible suspension by the game's global governing body.

The three skippers Dean Elgar, Temba Bavuma and Dane van Niekerk have signed a joint statement expressing their concerns before the ICC statement came as a relief.

"The ICC encourages Members to work with governments to resolve issues. Not all government intervention is problematic and for the ICC to get involved it requires a formal complaint from our Members that it is unwanted," the apex body said in a statement.

"Should that happen we will evaluate the situation based on the facts provided and plan an appropriate course of action."

An ICC source said that Cricket South Africa (CSA) hasn't yet reached a situation that demands the apex body's intervention.

"ICC doesn't want to press the panic button yet and want them to solve the issue themselves," the source said.

"We aren't saying that the government intervention in this case is problematic or not. It is a general view in terms of the process we follow."

"When the government grants funds etc. under certain conditions that is also termed as government intervention."

Earlier, the players feared if the

current impasse is not resolved soon, South Africa may not be able to take part in the ICC T20 World Cup, to be held in India in October-November.

"At a time when we should be enthusiastic about the future, we have to be concerned about the future (of the game)," they said.

"The Proteas Men's team has an ICC World T20 event in November. The current state of cricket administration undermines our preparation in this regard. It may even lead to our suspension from this event should the ICC decide to suspend South Africa."

Sports Minister Nathi Mthethwa has now indicated that he will step in to address the crisis, which has been going on for 18 months now, during which time

almost all top executives and the Board at CSA either stepped down or were dismissed.

"Government intervention in the sport will have dire consequences, and the captains feel that this may lead to the ICC suspending South Africa."

"The right to represent South Africa may be withdrawn and the ICC may suspend Cricket South Africa."

"These outcomes will in turn impact touring, broadcast rights and sponsorship deals. Ultimately, the financial viability of the game will suffer and cricket at all levels will be severely prejudiced," the players said.

"The Members' Council has now acted contrary to the wishes of the Minister, the Nicholson Recommendations, King IV Governance principles, and international best practice — how can this be in the best interests of our game?" the statement queried.

Liverpool Draw At Leeds Amid Criticism For Super League Role



Agencies

LEEDS: Liverpool conceded an 87th-minute equalizer to draw at Leeds 1-1, denying Jurgen Klopp's team a spot in the top four of the English Premier League table.

Which position Liverpool finishes might not matter anymore, given the team is one of the 12 clubs behind the creation of a controversial Super League that is threatening to split the historic structure of European football.

The breakaway league could potentially launch as early as next season, rendering meaningless the race for Champions League qualification that currently involves Liverpool, Chelsea and Tottenham three of the six rebel English clubs. Liverpool stayed in sixth place, outside the Champions League places, after Spain defender Diego Llorente scored with a header from an inswinging corner to earn Leeds a point that the team's second-half fight-back might have deserved.

Sadio Mane on Monday stroked the ball into an empty net in the 31st minute from a squared pass from Trent Alexander-Arnold to give Liverpool the lead and put the deposed champion on course for a fourth straight victory.

A win would have lifted Liverpool above West Ham and into fourth place.

Liverpool came in for lots of criticism ahead of the game from its own fans and those of rival clubs for being greedy and damaging the integrity of the English and wider game because of its role in the Super League plans. The club's American ownership bore the brunt of the criticism but the players were jeered and verbally abused as they arrived at Elland Road.

Leeds' players wore T-shirts during the warmup, which had the words "Earn it" on the front and "Football is for the fans" on the back seemingly a message to the rebel clubs.

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