

24<sup>th</sup> year OF PUBLICATION

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

Friday 23 April | 10 Ramazan | 1442 Hijri | Vol:24 | Issue: 95 | Pages:12 | Price: ₹3

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P3 CITY

## DC SRINAGAR SEEKS COOPERATION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN COVID-19 CONTAINMENT

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammed Aijaz Asad Thursday held an interactive meeting with prominent religious leaders, Imams, Khateebes, Auqaf members, with an aim...

THINK

## IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH

There can be no health without mental health, despite this clear evidence nowhere in the world does mental health enjoy parity with physical health in budgets, policies and practice. According to the World Health Organisation, Mental Health



P12 OUT POST

## MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN DIES OF COVID-19

"The great Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan breathed his last, late this evening. Doctors failed to revive his sinking heart. Pray for his maghfirat"



## Quote!

After the major sins which must be avoided, the greatest sin is that someone dies in a state of debt and leaves behind no asset to pay it off.  
—Hadith (Darimi)

## 10<sup>TH</sup> RAMAZAN

	Iftar TODAY	Sehri TOMMOROW
FIQAH HANAFIYA	07:10	04:23
FIQAH JAFARIYA	07:16	04:21



## NEWS DIGEST

### BSF Foils Infiltration Bid Along IB

**CHANDIGARH:** The BSF thwarted an infiltration attempt by three Pakistani intruders along the India-Pakistan international border in Punjab's Pathankot district, officials said on Thursday. Border Security Force personnel opened fire when they noticed suspicious movement of three people trying to enter into the Indian territory. **More On P10**

### CBK Conducts Raids Over JKPC Scam

**SRINAGAR:** Sleuths of Crime Branch Kashmir on Thursday carried out raids at different places in cases related to the J&K Projects Construction Corporation (JKPC) scam. The teams of CBK carried out raids in Srinagar's Nishat, Ganderbal district and Sopore town of Baramulla district in connection with a case FIR No. 18/21 registered. **More On P10**

### Grenade, Bullets Found During Searches

**JAMMU:** The government forces conducted search operations at two places in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district and recovered a rusted grenade and ammunition, officials said on Thursday. A CRPF and police party launched a search operation in Khidya village in Bari Brahmana area and recovered one rusted. **More On P10**

### 4 Gamblers Held In Bandipora: Police

**SRINAGAR:** Police on Thursday claimed to have arrested four gamblers in a raid in Ajas area of Bandipora district. Habib Ullah Ganie, Bashir Ahmad Bhat, Sajad Ahmad Shah and Ghulam Majed Ganie were arrested by a police team headed by in-charge police post Ajas on the basis of specific information. **More On P10**

# Covid-19- Nearly 2000 Test Positive In Single Day

## 243 Travellers, 12 Minors Among Infected; Eight More Die



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

### Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** At least 243 travellers, twelve minors and six security personnel were among 1965 new cases of coronavirus detected across Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, while the deadly infection also claimed lives

of eight more people raising the fatality count to 2,092. Among the new cases, 1176 were reported from Kashmir Valley and the remaining 789 from Jammu division taking the total number of people infected by the virus in the Union Territory

to 154407. Among those infected include 243 travellers—108 in Jammu division and 135 in Kashmir—besides 12 minors and six security forces men.

Giving district wise details, the officials said that Srinagar reported 590, Baramulla 198, **More On P10**

### SASB Temporarily Suspends Yatra Registration

Observer News Service

Amid a sharp spurt in coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir, the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board on Thursday announced to temporarily suspend registrations for the annual pilgrimage to the cave shrine in south Kashmir's Anantnag district. "Considering the evolving situation across the country and Union territory alike, it was decided to defer registrations for **More On P10**

### Kansal Tests Positive, Talat Admitted To SKIMS

Observer News Service

The Jammu and Kashmir government spokesperson Rohit Kansal on Thursday tested positive for coronavirus while Kashmir University, Vice Chancellor Prof Talat Ahmad was admitted to SK institute of medical sciences, Soura for Covid-19 related complications. Prof Talat was admitted to SKIMS Soura on Wednesday night with bilateral Covid pneumonia, days after testing **More On P10**

### KU Closes Campus After Cases Detected

Observer News Service

The Kashmir University administration on Thursday announced closure of its main campus for two days from Friday after cases of coronavirus were detected among the employees of the various units of the Varsity. The campus will remain closed for two days on April 23-24; however, essential services staff of the university health centre, sanitation, landscape wing, **More On P10**

## Gunmen In Hazmat Suits Loot Rs 6L From J&K Bank

Ajaz Ali

**SRINAGAR:** A security guard was injured on Thursday as unidentified gunmen wearing PPE kits looted Rs 6 lakh from a Jammu and Kashmir Bank (JKB) branch in Pattan area of Baramulla district. Three gunmen in hazmat suits forced their entry into the J&K Bank Khore Sherabad in Pattan on Thursday afternoon and decamped with Rs 6 lakh cash and a 12 bore rifle of the security guard, an official said. The armed robbers, he said, fled in a car which was parked outside the bank branch.

The official said the militants also injured a security guard posted at the branch. The robbers looted about Rs 6 lakh from the bank branch,



PTI quoted an official as saying. After the bank robbery, videos went viral on various social media networking websites showing gunmen firing shots in the air after locals' pelted stones and tried to prevent them from fleeing. The videos also showed the car abandoned by the gunmen at a distance from the bank. Meanwhile, police launched a massive **More On P10**

## HC Reserves Verdict On Re-Registration Of Non-J&K Vehicles

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Thursday reserved its verdict on clubbed petition seeking quashing of Regional Transport Officer Kashmir's circular on March 27, mandating the owners who have purchased their vehicles bearing outside number to apply for a new registration within fortnight. "Heard. Judgment is reserved" ordered a division bench of Justices Ali Mohammad Magrey and Vinod Chatterji Koul.

The court has already made it clear that pendency of the petitions would not be an

impediment for the Transport Authorities to screen the vehicles with non-local registration mark for checking their veracity vis-a-vis the documents and the bonafide entry into the territorial limits Jammu and Kashmir. However, the court has said that such exercise shall be undertaken by the officials of the transport department only.

The RTO Kashmir on Wednesday submitted that the decision to notify the circular was taken in a meeting convened by the Secretary to the Government, Transport Department for ensuring screening of the vehicle which bears the non-local registration. The government **More On P10**



## Dry Weather Across J&K From Today: Lotus

### Valley's Upper Reaches Receive Fresh Snow, Rains Lash Plains



KO Photo: Abid Bhat

### Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** The meteorological department on Thursday predicted improvement in wet weather conditions across Jammu and Kashmir from Friday, even as the upper reaches of Valley received fresh snowfall while the rain lashed plains dipping the day temperature sharply. "From April 23, weather

is most likely to remain dry in both regions till the end of the month," Director Meteorological department Sonam Lotus said Thursday. He said that rain and thunderstorms at many places of J&K and snowfall over higher reaches of Kashmir and Drass -Zojila area is likely to continue till Thursday evening. "There is **More On P10**



### Highway Open For Only Stranded Vehicles

Traffic authorities on Thursday said that only stranded traffic shall be allowed on Jammu-Srinagar highway, the only surface link connecting Kashmir Valley with the outside world. "Tomorrow (April 23) subject to fair weather and better road condition only **More On P10**

## Centre Withholds Rs 800 Cr Funds To J&K Under PMDP

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Union Finance Ministry has "withheld" release of funds to Jammu & Kashmir under the Prime Minister's Development package for the permanent restoration of infrastructure hit by the devastating floods in 2014, prompting the administration of the Union Territory to take up the matter with the Government of India at the highest level.

According to official documents, the Union Finance Ministry is yet to release more than Rs 800 to J&K administration for restoration of the public infrastructure affected by the floods.

A status report about implementation of PMDP reveals that against Rs 2000 crore earmarked under the package for the project, only

Rs 1178. 34 crore has been released by the Centre so far. "Balance amount of 811.64 crore need to be released," the report states.

The funds have not been released despite the National Institution for Transformation of India (NITI Aayog) recommending to the Union Finance Ministry to release Rs 560 crore after J&K administration submitted utilization certificate to the government's think-tank in 2019.

The NITI Aayog was monitoring the works taken up under the PMDP component for permanent restoration of the infrastructure damaged in the devastating deluge. Under this program, the funds are released by the Union Finance Ministry on recommendations of the NITI Aayog. In 2017, a **More On P10**

## Doctors Declare It Loud And Clear: 'Carelessness Will Doom Us'

Auqib Javeed

The doctors working in valley's tertiary-care hospitals have painted the grim picture of the second wave of Covid-19 saying that more and more young people are getting affected due to the virus.

"When you see a 27 years old, a 32 years old, a 21 years old die within a span of few days, due to pneumonia and it's complications, it sends a shiver down the spine, a kind of remorse and fear which cannot be expressed in words," posted Dr. Irtifa Kanth, Resident Medicine at

Shri Maharaja Hari Singh Hospital (SMHS) on his Facebook account. On Wednesday, Dr. Kanth said more than 30 patients with respiratory symptoms were admitted in SMHS and among them

around 10-12 young patients with pneumonias.

"We are seeing proportionally increased numbers of young people getting severe Covid disease this time as compared to last year,



however elderly still make up higher numbers," Dr. Kanth told Kashmir Observer.

The reason for this, Dr Kanth believes is possibly more "potent" strain. "Moreover," he said, "young people have increased amount of exposure."

Many other doctors who are dealing with the Covid-19 patients at the valley's primary tertiary-care hospital, echoes the comments of Dr. Kanth saying more young people are becoming victims of the deadly virus.

"Then you see groups of young people gather around a carrom board, without masks, without care for the future. It brings such disgust which again cannot be expressed in words," Dr. Kanth



added in his Facebook Post. On 17 April, the SMHS shut down its **More On P10**





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No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

KASHMIR  
OBSERVER

Friday| 23-04-2021

## New Findings Reveal If Excessive Social Media Usage Is Potentially Addictive Behaviour

### Agencies

The findings of a new study at the University of Strathclyde suggest that frequent usage of social media may not amount to the same behaviour, as that of addiction. The study invited 100 participants to locate specific social media apps on a simulated smartphone screen as quickly and accurately as possible while ignoring other apps. The participants were varied in the extent and type of their social media use and engagement. The research has been published in the Journal of Behavioural Addictions.

The exercise aimed to assess whether social media users who reported the greatest level of use were more likely to have their attention drawn to the apps through a process known as 'attentional bias,' which is a recognised hallmark of addiction. It also assessed whether this bias was associated with scores on established measures of social media engagement and 'addiction'. The findings did not indicate that users' attention was drawn more to social media apps than to any others, such as a weather app; they were also not associated with self-reported or measurable levels of addictive severity. This contrasted with other studies which have shown attentional bias related to addictions such as gambling and alcohol.

Dr David Robertson, a Lecturer in Psychology at Strathclyde and a partner in the research, said: "Social



media use has become a ubiquitous part of society, with 3.8 billion users worldwide. While research has shown that there are positive aspects to social media engagement, such as feelings of social connectedness and wellbeing, much of the focus has been on the negative mental health outcomes which are associated with excessive use, such as higher levels of depression and anxiety." The evidence to support such negative associations is mixed but there is also a growing debate as to whether excessive levels of social media use should become a clinically defined addictive behaviour, Robertson said.

The researchers did not find evi-

dence of attentional bias. People who frequently checked and posted their social media accounts were no more likely to have their attention drawn to the icon of a social media app than those who check and post less often.

"Much more research is required into the effects of social media use, both positive and negative before definitive conclusions can be reached about the psychological effects of engagement with these platforms. Our research indicates that frequent social media use may not, at present, necessarily fit into traditional addiction frameworks," Robertson concluded.

## Office of The Chief Executive Officer Srinagar Smart City Limited

(A J&K Government Undertaking)

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Budshah Building, Lalchowk, Srinagar, Kashmir, J&K

Email:- srinagarssl@gmail.com (CIN: U70200JK2017SGC010107)

Advertisement No. 02, SSCL of 2021; Dated: 20/04/2021.

Applications are invited for the appointment of the following posts on regular/full-time basis in Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL) to be stationed in Srinagar City

No. of Posts.	Position	Total Minimum Experience and Maximum Age Limit	Minimum Qualifications	Remuneration
1	Personnel Officer.	Minimum 3 years. Maximum age limit: 40 years	Post Graduate from recognized university, preferably in the field of Public Administration/ Science with min 60 percent marks in Graduation and PG with subjects among other as Public Administration/ Dietetics/ food service management / community health etc. Well versed with the knowledge of Computer and MS Office. With minimum qualification of Diploma in computer application Diploma / degree in education or community health/ public health Public Administration etc.	Level 5 with GP 2800 Per month

Experience Required Working Experience at any level in government organization is preferred. Well versed with the knowledge of Human Resource Management and Development and also in preventive & community health promotion

No. of Posts.	Position	Total Minimum Experience and Maximum Age Limit	Minimum Qualifications	Remuneration
1	Computer Operator / Record Keeper	Minimum 2 years. Maximum age limit: 40 years.	Post Graduate in Computers/IT from a recognized National or International University with min 60% marks.	Level 1 with GP 1800 Per month

Experience Required Candidate should have experience in drafting letters, data entry, data analysis, office management, etc. Should have good command over English language and should have good communication skills. Mandatory software skills: MS Office, Windows operating system.

### Other Terms and Conditions:

- The Candidate shall be posted in Srinagar City.
- The candidate shall have to give an undertaking that he/she shall abide by the HR Policy of SSCL and other Policies and procedures of the company.
- Candidate shall have to submit a declaration that he/she has not been charged/ convicted by the Hon'ble Court nor dismissed/removed/ compulsory retired by way of punishment from the Service of any Public/Private Sector Undertaking or from Government Department and that he/she has not been declared insolvent by any court.
- Candidate belonging to Government/Semi-Government organization/PSUs shall normally send their application through proper channel. However, in the event of difficulty, they may send the application directly and they will have to produce NOC from their organization in case they are shortlisted for selection process.

The application for the post should be enclosed with certificates and requisite documents along with the Biodata in the below mentioned format:

### BIODATA

- Post Applied for in SSCL \_\_\_\_\_
- Full Name with Title (e.g- Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr.) \_\_\_\_\_
- Parentage: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_
- Gender \_\_\_\_\_
- Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_
- Corresponding Address \_\_\_\_\_
- Mobile No. \_\_\_\_\_
- E-mail ID \_\_\_\_\_
- Nationality \_\_\_\_\_
- Domicile Certificate No. \_\_\_\_\_
- Education: \_\_\_\_\_

(Starting with the position list in reverse order for every qualification)

S.No.	Qualification	Specialization	College/University	Year of Passing

### 13. Experience: (Starting with the position list in reverse order every employment held since graduation)

S. No.	Employer (Name, Address to and Contact Details)	Period (from DD/MM/YYYY Format)	Experience in Years/ months	Assignment and role	Designation

S.No.	Skills acquired:	Institute/College/University	Level of Expertise

### DECLARATION:

I \_\_\_\_\_ Parentage \_\_\_\_\_ R/o \_\_\_\_\_  
solemnly affirms and declares as under:  
a. That I have not been charged/convicted from any court.  
b. That I have not been dismissed/removed/compulsorily retired by way of punishment from any public undertaking or department of Government.  
c. That I have not been declared as insolvent by any court.  
d. That no department inquiry, vigilance case or criminal case is pending against me  
e. That I am not on bail in any case from the court.  
f. That I, undersigned certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, this application correctly describes me, my qualifications and my experience. I understand that any willful mis-statement describes herein may lead to my disqualification or dismissal if engaged.  
(Signature of the candidate)

Name: .  
Parentage: .  
Address: .  
Contact No.: .  
Email: .

- The application form shall reach the office of Srinagar Smart City Ltd.; 1st Floor, Budshah Building, Lal Chowk, Srinagar; by or before 8th of May, 2021 (Saturday). Applications (including postal delays) shall not be entertained thereafter.
- Only those who meet the prescribed eligibility criteria need apply. If at any stage, it is found that the candidate does not meet the prescribed eligibility criteria, he/she will be disqualified.
- Shortlisted Candidates shall be called for interviews on a date to be notified separately. NO TA/DA will be provided to the candidate for appearing in the interview.
- SSCL reserves the right to reject any application without assigning any reason and right to cancel fully/partially the selections.
- Applicants are advised to visit SSCL website regularly for any update related to this advertisement.
- Incomplete applications without relevant supporting enclosures will be rejected.
- In case any mistake is detected in the selection process, SSCL reserves the right to modify/withdraw/cancel any communication made to the candidates.

Sd/-  
Chief Executive Officer  
Srinagar Smart City Limited

DIPK-NB-398/21

### PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly written in my Passport bearing No: H1414205 as Aamir Basharat, Father's Name: Basharat Qureshi, Mother's Name: Nasreena, while my correct name is Aamir Basharat Qureshi, Father's Name: Basharat Ahmed Qureshi, Mother's Name: Nasreen Basharat which need immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/ she may file his/ her objection in the Passport Office, Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Aamir Basharat Qureshi  
Father's Name: Basharat Ahmed Qureshi  
Mother's Name: Nasreen Basharat  
ib ko

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Ex Servicemen Identity Card in Tarathpora Shopping Market. on 12-03-2021. 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 concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

IMTIYAZ AHMAD KALGAN  
S/O RAJ MOHD KALGAN  
R/O TUMINA CHOWKIBAL KUPWARA  
Sult

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Ex Servicemen Identity Card in Tarathpora Shopping Market. on 15-03-2021 and SBI Credit Card on 30/03/2020 in Villgaum Shopping Market. 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 concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

MOHAMAD REYAZ BHAT  
S/O KHAZIR MOHD BHAT  
R/O AMARGARH TARATHPORA  
HANDWARA KUPWARA  
Sult

### NAME CHANGE

I want to change the name of my daughter from Miss Mahvish To Mahvish Blinte Mushtaq, any one having objection may contact on below mentioned number within one week from the issuance of this notice.

Prof. Mushtaq Ahamd  
9596187537

از دفتر تحصیلدار سو پور محمد شفیع لون با اجلاس ایکریکیٹیو مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول  
مضمون کاغذات درخواست منجانب معراج الدین جم ولد عبدل اجمام ساکنہ موضع  
سیلو تحصیل زینگیرہ مراد عطا یگی OBC سرٹیفکیٹ تحت 294 SRO  
استیہار مراد اگاہی ہر خاص و عام  
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں درخواست سائل دفتر ہذا میں زیر کارڈی ہے اس  
سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاں ہے  
کہ سائل موضع سیلو سو پر میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور کہ مذیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے  
عبدل اجمام جم ولد عبدل رزاق جمام ریٹائرڈ ملازم 64 سال  
فاطمہ بیگم زوجہ عبدل اجمام گھریلو کام 62 سال  
جاوید اجمام جم پر عبدل اجمام دکانداری 30 سال  
افروزہ بیگم زوجہ جاوید اجمام گھریلو کام 28 سال  
فیضان دختر جاوید اجمام شیرخوار 01 سال  
معراج الدین جم پر عبدل اجمام دکانداری سبزی بین 27 سال  
اس کے علاوہ کوئی افراد کہہ نہیں ہے سائل کے کہہ کی باوراء آمدنی 29194  
ہے سرٹیفکیٹ اجرا کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کوئی عذریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عذریا  
اعتراض ساتھ پوم اندر دفتر ہذا میں پیش کرے معیار کرنے بعد کوئی بھی عذریا اعتراض  
قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار jav

### Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Zahoor Ahmad Bhat S/o: Mohammad Sideeq Bhat R/o: Badran Magam Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04E-9830 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Magam. As well as HPA Endorsement with Mahindra & Mahindra Finance Service Srinagar.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.375  
Dated 22-04-2021 Assistant Regional Transport officer  
mcb Budgam Kashmir

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER HORTICULTURE (P&M) DIVISION JAMMU.

FRESH SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER.

NIT No.02 of 2021-22 e-tendering Endst. No.06-II DATED:- 17-04-2021

For and on behalf of the LT.Governor, J & K U.T. e-tenders are invited on **item rate** basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered

with J&K Govt. CPWD ,Railways and other state/Central Governments for the followings works:

S. N o	Name of work	Est. cost (Rs.in lacs)	Cost of T/D (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Time for completion	Time and date of opening of Technica Bid	Class of contract or	AA Accorded vide No.&dt.	T.S.No & dt.	Position of funds
1	Providing and Laying 150mm thick Wet Mix Macadam (WMM), 50mm thick B.M and 25 mm thick SDBC in Fruit and Vegetable Market Batole under Languishing (JKIDFC) (7 <sup>th</sup> Time)	32.00	1000/-	--	30 Days	26-04-2021 1400 hrs	Hot Mix Plant/ A&B	96-DHPM of 2019 dated 28-02-2020	685 of February 2021 dated 18-02-2021	Committed Under Languishing

**Note:-Contractors who have got contractor cards issued from Kashmir province, it is mandatory for them to upload their verification certificate of Crime Branch along with other qualifying documents failing which their tenders will be declared non-responsive.**

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

01.	Date of issue of Tender Notice	17-04-2021
02.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 17-04-2021 ( 18 00 hours) upto 24-04-2021 (18 00 hours)
03.	Bid submission start date	17-04-2021( 1800 hours)
04.	Bid submission end date	24-04-2021 ( 1800 hours)
05.	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (on line)	26-04-2021 at ( 1400 hrs ) in the Office of the <b>Executive Engineer Horticulture (P&amp;M) Division B.C.Road Jammu.</b>

- Bids must be uploaded along with scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury challan/ Receipt towards the cost of tender documents indicating **the name of the work as well as NIT No.** by crediting the requisite charges to MH 0435 OAP in favour of **Executive Engineer Horticulture (P&M) Division B.C.Road Jammu** and Bid Security Declaration on the notarized Affidavit .
- The date and time of opening of financial bids shall be notified on Web site [WWW.jktenders.govt.in](http://WWW.jktenders.govt.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The financial bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same web site in the office of **Executive Engineer Horticulture (P&M) Division B.C.Road Jammu.**
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening technical bids.
- The Bidder shall be disqualified from bidding for any contract within this office for a period of 03 year for the date of notification if :-
  - any bidder/tender withdraws his bid/tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
  - Failure of successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
  - Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- Instructions to bidders regarding e-tendering process.**
- Bidders are advised to down load bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) acquaint bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get digital signature certificate (DSC) as per information technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
- bids will be opened on line as per time schedule mentioned in para-1.
- bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Furnishing of the Hard copies of bids immediately after submission of the e-Tenders is dispensed with. The same shall be obtained only from the bidder who is declared as L-1 after opening of financial bids.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents in terms of soft copies with the technical bid and no documents in terms of Hard Copies shall be entertained. Bid security declaration and tender document fee is to be submitted in both soft as well as in Hard copies .However, in case of any clarification, the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises.

Sd/- Executive Engineer  
Horticulture (P&M) Div.  
Jammu.

NO:- EEHPM/2021-22/06-11  
DT:- 17-04-2021

DIPK-687/21



# Dc Srinagar Seeks Cooperation Of Religious Leaders In Covid-19 Containment

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammed Aijaz Asad Thursday held an interactive meeting with prominent religious leaders, Imams, Khateeb, Aqaf members, with an aim to seek their opinion to sensitize the people about the pandemic and the SOPs to be followed in Covid-19 containment.

CEO Wakaf Board, Mufti Fareed u Din and Additional Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Dr Syed Hanief Balkhi were also present on the occasion.

While addressing the meeting, the DC said that Religious leaders, Imaams, Khatebs, A-



qaf members and Management Committees of other local Masjids have a key role in the battle against fresh wave of Covid-19 in order to bring about a con-

scientious behavioral change with regard to the importance of wearing masks, maintaining hygiene and social distancing.

He urged upon them to pro-

**THE DC SAID THAT** the war against the pandemic cannot be won without active cooperation of the people and everyone needs to take extra care and adhere to Covid-19 SOPs in letter and spirit.

actively sensitize the people to adhere to Covid-19 SOPs and get vaccinated at an earliest, which is safe and imperative to contain Covid-19 infection.

The DC said that the war against the pandemic cannot be won without active cooperation of the people and everyone needs to take extra care and adhere to Covid-19 SOPs in letter

and spirit.

During the meeting the Religious Ulmas and Khateeb threw light upon Islamic Teachings and quoted several Verses of Holy Quran with regard to SOPs to be followed while facing any pandemic.

They assured full support to the administration in fighting the war against Covid-19 pandemic. They said safety of people is priority and will extend all cooperation to the decisions of administration for safety and protection of the society.

On the occasion, the participants put forth their opinions and suggestions before the DC to prevent and contain the fresh wave of Covid-19.



**A LOCAL RESIDENT WALKS ALONG THE BANKS OF DAL LAKE**, on Boulevard road, in Srinagar amid heavy showers on Thursday. KO Picture/Abid Bhat

## City Centre Traders Allege Harassment By SMC

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Traders Association at Regal Chowk Srinagar on Thursday blamed the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) employees of resorting to harassment of the shopkeepers in the historic marketplace.

President Kashmir Traders Manufacturers Association (KTMF) Muhammad Yaseen Khan said, "Prior to any action, they should inform the traders as it leads to loss of hard earned money."

He added that traders are the stakeholders in every process as it is due to their taxes that administration is running its affairs.

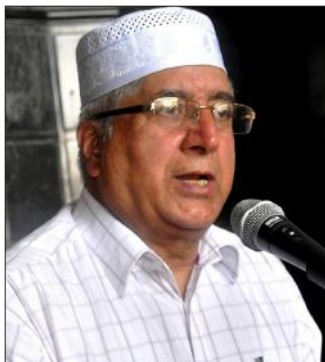
He further added that this historic marketplace is itself an example of law abiding shopkeepers, who never violated any law but despite this, harassing them is an unethical act.



"One of the prominent shopkeepers was imposed a fine for littering when he was actually taking new stocks inside. He was directed to pay fine of Rs 5,000 within two minutes or that it would be doubled. We are not against discipline but this is not the right approach," the traders said.

"We were fined for littering but that wasn't the case," a trader said. They urged Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and LG Manoj Sinha to personally intervene in the matter. (CNS)

## Darul Khair Pays Tributes To Deceased Muhammad Shafi Khan



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Darul Khair Mirwaiz Manzil Srinagar Thursday paid tributes to its member Muhammad Shafi Khan who passed away on Wednesday saying the deceased played a selfless role in taking forward the philanthropic and relief work of the organisation through its platform.

"Under the leadership of Darul Khair's patron Mirwaiz

Umar Farooq, late Muhammad Shafi Khan worked as a volunteer in taking the relief and rehabilitation work and programmes of Darul Khair to their logical conclusion. He was instrumental in generating donations for Darul Khair," a statement of Dar-ul-Khair said. Late Muhammad Shafi Khan also played a crucial role in rehabilitation of the poor and severely affected people during the 2014 floods in Kashmir, under the Akh Akis programme initiated by the Mirwaiz. "Under this initiative, several houses were constructed besides many poor families were rehabilitated."

Terming the demise of Khan as a "Milli and social loss", Darul Khair on behalf of the organisation expressed condolence and solidarity with the bereaved family particularly the deceased's wife, children and siblings, saying the organisation is with them at this hour of grief.

## Seven More Srinagar Localities Declared Micro Containment Zones

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The district administration Srinagar on Thursday declared five more localities of Batamalo and Hazratbal Medical Zones as Micro Containment Zones in view of detection of fresh COVID-19 cases from the areas.

Officials said that seven more localities including Sheikh-ul-Alam Colony Hyderpora, Shah Anwar Colony and Wazabagh in Hyderpora, Hamdania Colony Sector 5 Bemina, Usmania Colony Bemina, HIG Colony Lane No 3 Bemina and Main Campus University of Kashmir have been declared as Micro Containment Zones to prevent the further spread of the virus.

"More than fifteen Covid-19 positive cases have been reported from Shah Anwar Colony, Wazabagh Hyderpora area of Srinagar city in past few days, developing into a cluster of MCZS.



We apprehend that the Covid-19 positive patients in the said cluster might have come in contact with many other persons in the area and there are chances of further transmission of the deadly virus in the locality and its surroundings," an order issued by Srinagar admin reads.

It states that in order to break further transmission of Covid-19 in the area and its surroundings, it is felt expedient to take stringent measures by restricting the movement of

people and other activities in and around its surroundings.

"The area of 300 mtr radius from epicenter in, Shah Anwar Colony/ Wazabagh Hyderpora Tehsil Chanapora shall be containment zone. There shall be no inward or outward movement of any person from/to the said area.

In case the spread of clusters goes beyond 300 mtr, the committee headed by Administrator of the containment zone (Tehsildar) may decide boundary of containment zone," it reads.

## Defunct Drainage Inundates Green Colony Ellahi Bagh, Locals Aghast

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The incessant rainfall has caused water-logging in Green Colony in Ellahi bagh Srinagar as the authorities have failed to repair the drainage system in the area.

"The non-maintenance of the drainage system has left the local populace here to lurch at large," Zahoor Ahmad, a local resident said.

He said the drainage water, after incessant rainfall, has inundated the whole area, forcing the residents to remain confined to the four walls of their homes.

They appealed the concerned authorities to look into the matter and ensure that the drainage system in their locality is repaired at an earliest so that they could have a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, JEE Haneef Ahmad said that the problems being faced by the locality residents will be resolved soon—(KNO)

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### LOST OF DRIVING LICENSE

I have lost my Driving License Bearing Registration No. JK1620110006722. Now applied for its duplicate if anybody has any objection in this regard may file at ARTO Anantnag within Seven (7) days after that no objection shall be entertained.

Name:- Karnail Singh  
S/O Foja Singh  
R/O Singhpora Nowgam Anantnag

mja

### THE UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR, SRINAGAR ATTENTION PLEASE

The Candidate whose Photograph is Published in this notice is claiming to have LOST his /her Original Marks Certificate (s) of Class B. Sc 3rd Year (General Course ) Issued by University of Kashmir Under Roll No.9513 with following particulars:

Name:- SANJAY KUMAR BAWNOO  
Parentage:- RATTAN LAL BAWNOO  
Residence:- SACTER 5, SHANKER COLONY GANGYAL JAMMU  
Roll No. (s)

1) Class 3rd Year 9513 Year & Session 2002-3 NOV. JAN Now the Candidate has applied for their duplicate. Anybody (if) having any objections in this regard may please file the same before the undersigned within (07) days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides the above referred Marks Certificate treated as cancelled.

mja

Sd/  
Assistant Secretary

### PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to be notified for the information that I have been asked for PACKING REGISTRATION by Legal Metrology Department. The things which I am having intention to pack are Groceries and departmental items etc. If anyone or any firm, company is having any sort of objection then the person, firm or company should put the said objection within 7 days to the legal metrology department Bemina Srinagar if no objections are received during this period then no objections will be accepted after.

Name of the packer/ Danish Ahmad Sankar  
M/5 7c Departmental store  
Address: Hamdaniya colony Bemina srg 9070261261

ajk

از نیات سوپور

مضمون کاغذات درخواست متناہب عابد القادر ولد غلام قادر چام ساکنہ حنفیہ کانی آرپورہ سوپورہ ہمدان علی سٹریٹ 294 تحت سٹریٹ 294 تحت خود

اشہتر ہمدان علی گاہی ہر خاص و عام

ملاحظہ مندرجہ عنوان میں درخواست مال دفتر ڈائریکٹوریٹ ہے اس مسئلے میں بنیادی حلقہ سے رپورٹ قبول رکھنا طلب کیا گیا ہے جس سے عیاض ہے کہ مکمل موزع آرپورہ میں رہائش پذیر ہے اور جام ذات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے کہ بذیل فرم پیش ہے

غلام قادر چام ولد عابد علی سٹریٹ 294 سال 60 سرپرہ کمرہ

مصر و دیگر چام ولد عابد علی سٹریٹ 58 سال گھر کا کام

مصر و دیگر چام ولد عابد علی سٹریٹ 23 سال زیر تعلیم

عابد القادر پسر زیر تعلیم 21 سال

اس کے علاوہ کوئی فرد کہ نہیں ہے سال کے کہہ کی ہمدان علی سٹریٹ 29843 ہے سٹریٹ ایک ایڑا کرنے اس اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا اعتراض ساتھ ہی ہم اندر دفتر ڈائریکٹوریٹ سے معیا کرنے بعد کو کوئی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نامیہ تحصیلدار

gms

### 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 - (Open)
- Mughal Road - (Closed)
- Srinagar- Leh- (open)

### This Day in History

- 1925 - Having badly defeated Spain and driven her out of Spanish Morocco, the native Rif, led by Abd-el-Krim, turn on the French in French Morocco
- 1941 - Greece Army surrenders to German Nazis
- RAF brings Greek king George II to Egypt
- 1942 - 4-day allied bombing on Rostock begins
- 1943 - British & US offensive directed at Tunis and Bizerta
- 1949 - Netherlands annexes Elten & Tudderer
- 1965 - Launch of 1st Soviet communications satellite
- becomes 1st in-flight casualty
- 1971 - Soyuz 10 launched; cosmonauts become 1st in Salyut 1 space station
- 1972 - Apollo 16 astronauts explores Moon surface
- 1978 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalitinsk USSR
- 1984 - AIDS-virus identified as HTLV-III (acquired immune deficiency syndrome)
- 1992 - McDonald's opens its 1st fast-food restaurant in China
- 1993 - Eritrea votes to secede from Ethiopia
- 1997 - Omara massacre in Algeria: 42 villagers are killed.
- 2003 - Beijing closes all schools for two weeks because of the SARS virus.
- 2012 - 38,000 London Marathon entrants have their home and email contacts published in a data protection breach
- 2013 - 28 people are killed and 70 are injured during clashes between police and Sunni Muslims in Hawija, Iraq
- 2013 - 21 people are killed during violent unrest in Xinjiang, China

## From KO Archives

## MANMOHAN SPEAKS OF 'FINAL SETTLEMENT' OF KASHMIR ISSUE

**JAKARTA** - In the most optimistic assessment yet of the India-Pakistan peace process, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said Friday that "if allowed to go forward" it could help in the "final settlement" of the Kashmir dispute.

"I really believe that if this process is allowed to go forward, it will create a climate conducive to die final settlement," the prime minister told reporters accompanying him on his visit here for the Asian-African summit during a press conference on "board Air-India One.

But Manmohan Singh said it was not possible to put a time frame for resolving die problem. "I really don't know today. It is a process. I can't lay down a timetable, where will it lead us or when will it."

"But I am convinced this is die way of looking at die problem which creates a situation where there are no losers, no winners.

"They only gainers are the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the prospects of reconciliation between the people of India and the people of Pakistan," he added.

Asked about the reference to "soft borders" by both him and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf during the latter's visit to India, the prime minister said India and Pakistan have to tackle die Kashmir problem from a "different perspective".

"Territorial disputes are not 'easy to resolve overnight. They take time," he said.

But he said there was "a lot" India and Pakistan could do together by focusing on die interests of the people of Jammu and Kashmir living on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) so that they, can "lead a life of dignity and self-respect".

The LoC divides Kashmir between India and Pakistan.

"We can create an environment of freer trade, freer movement, thereby the development process on both sides can improve," the prime minister said.

He said though the last few weeks had been hectic with the visits of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Musharraf, the visits had produced "solid results".

Wen's visit led to both countries agreeing to a political settlement of their boundary question-and putting an end to the controversy over Sikkim's status, with die Chinese leader declaring the former Himalayan kingdom as an integral part of India.

"We agreed that die delineation of die LAC (Line of Actual Control) should be accelerated," Manmohan Singh said, adding: "I am confident that our- relations will take a new mm for the better."

He also referred to the joint statement issued at the end of Musharraf's visit in which both sides declared the peace process-as "irreversible" and said: "It is my sincere desire to work with President Musharraf to carry forward, this process of reconciliation."

(Kashmir Observer, 23 April, 2005)



## US Shares Details Of Sanctions Ready To Lift With Iran



Agencies

**PARIS:** The United States has shared with Iran details of the sanctions it is prepared to lift under a return to a nuclear accord, a senior official said Wednesday.

The United States and Iran are taking their second break from indirect talks in Vienna on how to restore a 2015 nuclear accord backed by President Joe Biden, after his predecessor Donald Trump walked away.

"This time, we have gone into more detail," a senior US official said of the latest EU-led talks.

"We have provided Iran with a number of examples of the kind of sanctions that we believe we would need to lift in order to come back into compliance and the sanctions that we believe we would not need to lift," he said.

The official said the United States has also described a third category of "difficult cases" in which Trump reimposed sanctions that are not related to nuclear activity but were done "purely for the purpose of preventing" Biden from re-entering the deal.

Iran has pressed for the United States to lift all sanctions imposed under Trump before it rolls back the steps Tehran took away from the 2015 deal in protest.

The US official said that the United States and Iran have not yet gone into detail on the question of who goes first.

But the official said: "We're open to different kinds of sequencing which meets our interest -- which is to see both sides in full compliance."

He declined to confirm a Wall Street Journal report that the Biden administration has voiced a willingness to ease sanctions on

the Iranian finance and oil sectors.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani earlier voiced optimism, saying that negotiations have made "60-70 percent progress."

**'Progress' but warnings**  
With Iran declining to meet the United States, European diplomats have been shuttling between the two sides.

Diplomats from Britain, China, France, Germany, Iran and Russia have been meeting in a luxury Vienna hotel, while US envoys are participating indirectly in the talks from a nearby hotel.

"We have made some progress but there is still a way to go," said a European diplomat.

"We encourage all sides to seize the diplomatic opportunity in front of us. We condemn escalatory measures by any actor which could jeopardise progress."

The European powers had last week expressed "grave concern" over Iran's move to boost uranium enrichment to 60 percent in response to what Tehran says was an attack by Israel against the key nuclear facility of Natanz. The step will bring Iran closer to the 90 percent purity threshold for military use and shorten its potential "breakout time" to build an atomic bomb -- a goal the Islamic republic denies.

Israel has neither confirmed nor denied involvement at Natanz but public radio reports in the country, citing unnamed intelligence sources, said it was a sabotage operation by the Mossad spy agency.

The United States has had no diplomatic relations with Iran since its embassy was seized by radicals in the wake of the 1979 Islamic Revolution that ousted the pro-West shah.

## US House Passes Bill To Prevent Another 'Muslim Ban'

Agencies

The US House of Representatives has passed a bill that would limit the ability of any United States president to impose a travel ban on the basis of religion, a move that was welcomed by civil rights advocates as "a major step forward".

The legislation, known informally as the NO BAN Act, comes in response to former President Donald Trump's controversial "Muslim ban" that barred travel to the US from several Muslim-majority countries.

The bill, which must also pass in the US Senate to become law, was approved by a 218-208 vote in the House on Wednesday.

"The Muslim ban tore families apart, put lives on hold for years and labelled Muslims, Africans and other targeted people as threatening outsiders," said Madhha Hussain, counsel to Muslim Advocates, a US civil rights group. "We must ensure that no presi-



dent can enact discriminatory bans like this ever again and with the passage of the NO BAN Act in the House, we are taking a major step forward to ensuring that they won't," Ahussain said in a statement as the bill was passed.

President Joe Biden reversed Trump's travel ban by executive order on January 20, his first day in office.

Trump issued the ban shortly after taking office in 2017, drawing widespread protests and condemnation.

It was struck down twice by US courts before it was recast as a national security measure and ultimately upheld in 2018 by the US Supreme Court.

## UN Chief: Restore Planet Amid Pandemic

Agencies

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said that recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is a chance to set the world on a cleaner, greener, and more sustainable path.

"Let us all commit to the hard work of restoring our planet and making peace with nature," he said in a message marking International Mother Earth Day on April 22.

The UN chief said as they mark International Mother Earth Day, the planet is at a tipping point. "Humanity continues to abuse the natural world."

He said humans heedlessly plunder the Earth's resources, deplete its wildlife and treat air, land and seas as dumping



grounds.

"Crucial ecosystems and food chains are being pushed to the brink of collapse. This is suicidal. We must end our war on nature and nurse it back to health," Guterres said.

That means, he said, bold climate action to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degree

Celsius and adapt to the changes to come.

"It means stronger steps to protect biodiversity. And it means reducing pollution by building circular economies that drive down waste," he said adding that these steps will safeguard only home and create millions of new jobs.

**CRUCIAL ECOSYSTEMS AND FOOD CHAINS ARE BEING** pushed to the brink of collapse. This is suicidal. We must end our war on nature and nurse it back to health," Guterres said.

## WHO Seeks Next Steps In Covid-19 Origins Probe

Agencies

After an international mission to China turned up more questions than answers about the pandemic origins, the WHO is evaluating how to move forward through a diplomatic quagmire to solve the mystery.

Determining how the virus that causes Covid-19 first began spreading among humans is seen as vital to preventing future outbreaks.

But a long-delayed report, drafted by the team of international experts sent to Wuhan at the start of the year and their Chinese counterparts, drew no firm conclusions and called for more investigation.

The World Health Organization's emergency committee this week urged the "rapid implementation" of the report recommendations for phase two probes.

But while the WHO and countries worldwide agree further investigation is needed, a fight is brewing over what the next phase of inquiry should entail and where it should take place.

It took more than a year after Covid-19 first surfaced in Wuhan in December 2019 to get the international expert team to China, and Beijing appears intent on seeing the next phase focus elsewhere.

"We hope that other relevant countries will cooperate closely with WHO experts in a scientific, open, transparent and responsible manner, as China has done," Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters on March 31.

**'Absurd'**  
But critics question the transparency around the first mission, called for in a resolution passed last May by WHO member countries, and insist for more investigation in China is needed.

"At a very basic level, there is unanimity in terms of that the phase two should take place in China," a senior Western diplomat in Geneva said, requesting anonymity.

Beijing was the only party



voicing "the view that somehow the next phase should be in any other region," the diplomat added.

"The idea that the next phase should not focus primarily on China is absurd," US geopolitical expert Jamie Metzl told AFP.

Metzl, one of 24 scientists from the US, Europe, Australia and Japan who published an open letter earlier this month demanding a more comprehensive investigation, described the first mission and resulting report as "deeply flawed."

Critics charge the mission was heavily orchestrated by Beijing and that the report focused disproportionately on theories favoured by China.

**Ranking hypotheses**  
While the international and Chinese experts provided no clear answers on the origins of the pandemic, they ranked a number of hypotheses according to how likely they believed they were.

The report said the virus jumping from bats to humans via an intermediate animal was the most probable scenario, while it dismissed a theory involving the virus leaking from a laboratory as "extremely unlikely."

For basically every area investigated it said more study was needed.

Except one: the lab-leak theory -- a US favourite under former president Donald Trump that has always been flatly rejected by China.

After the report was released, WHO Chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus however insisted all theories remained on the table.

In particular, he said the probe into Wuhan's virology labs was not "extensive enough" and that

## Syrian Anti-Aircraft Missile Lands Near Israeli Nuclear Site

Agencies

The Israeli army says a Syrian anti-aircraft missile has missed its target and exploded near a nuclear facility in Dimona city in the country's south, an attack a military spokesman said was likely an accident.

There were no immediate reports of any injuries or damage in the incident that triggered warning sirens in the area near the secretive Dimona nuclear reactor. The Israeli military said the nuclear site was not hit by the blast.

Reporting from West Jerusalem, Al Jazeera's Harry Fawcett said the Syrian missile that fell near Dimona was a sizeable blast that could be heard in Jerusalem, about 150km (93 miles) away from the site.

**'Syria intercepts Israeli attack'**

Syria's state news agency, SANA, said Syrian air defences intercepted the Israeli attack that targeted areas in the Damascus suburbs early on Thursday.

"Air defences intercepted the rockets and downed most of them," the SANA agency said. However, four soldiers were injured in the attack and some material damage took place, it said.

According to the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (SOHR), Israeli missiles hit the air defence base of the Syrian government in the town of Dmeir -- roughly 40km (25 miles) northeast of Damascus.

Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Israel has routinely carried out raids in Syria, mostly targeting Iranian and Lebanese Hezbollah forces



An Israeli military spokesman said the Syrian missile had been fired at Israeli aircraft during an earlier strike and had overflowed its target and reached the Dimona area.

The errant Syrian missile was an SA-5, one of several fired at Israeli air force planes, according to the spokesman.

The Israeli military said that in response to the launch, it attacked several missile batteries in Syria, including the one that fired the projectile that struck its territory.

"A surface-to-air missile was fired from Syria to Israel's southern Negev. In response, we struck the battery from which the missile was launched and additional surface-to-air batteries in Syria," the Israeli military said.

as well as government troops. But it has rarely publicly acknowledged them.

Israel has long sought to prevent bitter foe Iran from establishing itself in the war-torn nation.

The latest missile launch comes as tensions run high between Israel and Iran, with Tehran promising "revenge" after the sabotage of its Natanz uranium enrichment plant.

Iran said it believes Israel was behind the incident -- when a small explosion hit the plant's electricity distribution earlier this month.

Israel did not claim responsibility for the incident, but unsourced media reports in the country attributed it to the Israeli security services carrying out a "cyber operation".

## 5 Killed In Blast At Pakistan Hotel Hosting Chinese Ambassador: Official



Agencies

**QUETTA, PAKISTAN:** The Pakistan Taliban claimed responsibility Thursday for a deadly bomb blast at a luxury hotel hosting the Chinese ambassador in the southwest of the country, as officials raised the death toll to five.

Beijing said it strongly condemned the attack, although the Taliban said Pakistan security officials were the target of the blast.

The bomb was placed in a car parked at the Serena hotel -- part of a five-star chain popular with diplomats -- and detonated late Wednesday in the city of Quetta, capital of Balochistan province.

Pakistan is fighting several low-level insurgencies in the impoverished province waged by Islamist, separatist and sectarian groups.

"The suicide bomber hit the security officials exactly as it was planned," the spokesperson for Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan

(TTP) said in a statement.

Police said the blast came from an improvised explosive device, and security officials and hotel staff were among those killed.

Describing the blast as a "terrorist attack", China's foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said in Beijing that the Chinese delegation was not present when the bomb detonated.

Gu Wenliang, agriculture commissioner at China's embassy in Pakistan, told the Chinese newspaper Global Times that the bomb had detonated 10 minutes before their expected return.

"I was walking through the car park when I heard a sudden loud sound and the earth shook under my feet," said Khuda Baksh, a guard at the hotel. "Everyone was running for their lives before I lost consciousness", he told AFP.

For years the TTP unleashed deadly attacks on urban centres across Pakistan from their bases along the Afghan border, where they provided shelter to an array of global jihadist groups including Al Qaeda.

But a massive military offensive launched in 2014 largely destroyed the group's command and control structure, dramatically reducing insurgent violence throughout Pakistan.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Indonesia Says Sailors On Missing Submarine Have Oxygen Until Saturday

**JAKARTA:** The sailors aboard a missing Indonesian submarine have enough oxygen to last until Saturday, aboard a vessel that had been in good condition, the country's defence chiefs said on Thursday, as the search for the submarine continued.

There were no signs of the KRI Nanggala-402, with 53 crew aboard, as of Thursday afternoon, where a search and rescue mission was ongoing in calm weather conditions.

Yudo Margono, the navy chief of staff, said that there would be enough oxygen for the sailors to last until Saturday, and that the submarine had been cleared for use.

"The submarine has received a letter of feasibility from the navy," he told a news conference.

**"It was ready for battle."**

He was speaking alongside the chief of Indonesia's military and its defence minister, Prabowo Subianto,



to, at a news conference in Bali a day after the 44-year-old submarine went missing while conducting a torpedo drill north of the island.

The 1,395-tonne vessel was built in Germany in 1977, according to the defence ministry, and joined the Indonesian fleet in 1981. It underwent a two-year refit in South Korea that was completed in 2012. Prabowo acknowledged it was

"imperative that we should modernise our defence equipment faster". He did not suggest there were any problems with the vessel.

An aerial search found an oil spill near the submarine's dive location, and two navy vessels with sonar capability had been deployed to assist in the search, officials said.

Yudo also said authorities had found an item with "high magnetic force"

floating at a depth of 50 to 100 metres.

Earlier, navy spokesman Julius Widjojo told KompasTV that the diesel-powered submarine that runs on electric batteries while submerged could sustain a depth of 250-500 metres (820-1640 ft).

"Anything more than that can be pretty fatal, dangerous," the spokesman told KompasTV.

The seas in the area are shallower than in other parts of the archipelago but can still reach depths of more than 1,500 metres.

In a statement on Wednesday, the navy said "it was possible that during static diving, a blackout occurred so control was lost and emergency procedures cannot be carried out and the ship falls to a depth of 600-700 metres."

Indonesia said a number of countries in the region had responded to requests for assistance. **REUTERS**

## Son Helped Father Hide Wealth In Record Divorce Case: Court

Agencies

**LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM:** The ex-wife of a Russian billionaire on Wednesday won a British court case against her son, whom she accuses of helping his father hide his assets during the bitter divorce battle.

The High Court of England and Wales in 2016 awarded Tatiana Akhmedova 41.5 percent of Farkhad Akhmedov's \$1-billion-plus fortune.

But she said 65-year-old businessman Akhmedov has hidden some of his assets with the help of their 27-year-old son, Temur Akhmedov, and claimed she is owed around Euro 70 million.

Temur Akhmedov asked the Family Division of the High Court in London to dismiss her claims against him, but judge Gwyneth Knowles ruled in favour of his mother.

"Today's judgment is the inevi-



table conclusion given Farkhad's failure to behave honourably in the first instance," London-based Tatiana Akhmedova said in a statement.

A spokesman for Temur Akhmedov said he had "never sought to take sides or get involved but inevitably found himself sucked into the vortex of a bitter family dispute."

"His subsequent actions were only ever motivated by his desire to end the war between his parents."

"While he fundamentally disagrees with this judgment, he would consider it a price worth paying should it lead to a reasonable settlement be-

tween the parents he both loves."

Azerbaijan-born Akhmedov became a senator in Russia after making his money in oil and gas. He featured on a 2018 US government list of Russian business and political elites.

The court was earlier told that Akhmedov had transferred a yacht and art collection into the ownership of trusts in Liechtenstein in what Akhmedova has described as a "strategy of evasion".

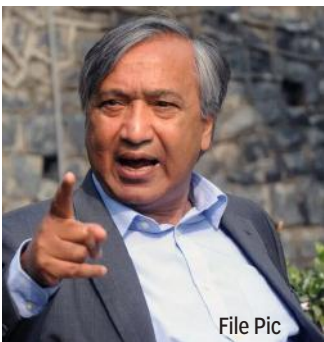
He bought the 115-metre (377-foot) yacht -- the MV Luna -- from the Chelsea football club owner Roman Abramovich.

In her written ruling, judge Knowles quoted the Russian novel "Anna Karenina". "All happy families are alike, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way," she said.

"With apologies to Tolstoy, the Akhmedov family is one of the unhappiest ever to have appeared in my courtroom."



## J&K Admin's Directive To Constitute STF For Employees Arbitrary, Draconian: Tarigami



File Pic

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir administration's latest order to constitute a Special Task Force to dismiss or take other punitive action against the government employees allegedly found in "anti-national" activities without holding any inquiry is arbitrary, draconian and is against the interests of the lakhs of employees working in the region, CPIM leader You-suf Tarigami said on Thursday. In a statement he said there

are already enough provisions in the law to take action against those employees, who are found violating service rules and there was no need to issue new orders on the account. The latest order can serve as a tool to the government and bureaucrats to suppress their subordinates. A sword of uncertainty has been kept on the heads of employees which can also be exploited by their superiors.

"Dismissing an employee or taking punitive action against him without holding any inquiry is against the principles of justice and basic rights. An employee is first a citizen and has all the constitutional rights. The need of the hour is to safeguard these constitutional rights."

He said such measures deepen the anger and discontentment among the ranks of employees. It seems this order has not been given a thought before passing and needs to be reviewed.

## LMD Collects Rs 7L As Fine From Erring Traders

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The field executives of Legal Metrology Department (LMD) intensified the market inspections across the valley and recovered a penal sum of over Rs 7 lacs from the erring traders.

The department conducted 1814 market inspections to detect the violations and booked 272 erring traders for violating Legal Metrology Laws. The violators were mainly vegetable sellers/fruit sellers/kirana sellers/

cooking gas dealers/ mutton sellers etc.

The nature of offences was mainly use of unstamped commercial weights and measures and short- weightings/ short-measurements/ over-charging on packed products.

Meanwhile, the consumers have been asked that they may contact the department on toll-free No: 1800-180-7114 during office hours in case any trader is using non-standard weight or measure or indulges in short-weightment or measurement.

**FINED**

## Prof Nazir Is New Dean Of KU's Faculty Of Commerce And Management Studies

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Professor Nazir Ahmad on Thursday assumed the charge as Dean Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, University of Kashmir.

Prof Nazir has 30 years of teaching, research and administrative experience and has held various important academic and administrative positions in the university, including Head Department Of Commerce, Director Centre for Career Planning and Counselling.

Specialising in Human Resource Management, Organisational Behaviour, Strategic Management, Prof Nazir has several research papers, articles and publications to his credit.

He has guided several PhD and M.Phil scholars while presenting his research across universities and research institutions.

Prof Nazir has also been a Professor at Saudi Arabia's Jazan University and also headed, Department of Business & Economics, Mazoon College, Sultanate of Oman, Muscat.

Prof Nazir has attended a number of advanced courses/ workshops/seminars in various universities.

He has been on the editorial board of various reputed journals and the editor of the faculty journal 'The Business Review'.

Prof Nazir has received many awards for his outstanding contributions in academics, research, and administration.

## BGSBU Suspends Offline Classes Till May 15

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) Rajouri Thursday ordered suspension of all in-person academic activities in the varsity till May 15.

An order issued by Prof. Iqbal Parwez, Dean Academic Affairs, the decision has been taken in view of sharply escalating COVID-19 pandemic and in pursuance to Government advisory.

"All offline classes and in-person academic activities will remain suspended until May 15,

2021," reads the circular.

The Guidelines for conducting online classes will be strictly in accordance with the notification issued by the Dean Academic Affairs vide Communication (No. BGSBU DAA / 20/ 273 dated 14.08.2020) and the same is available on the University Website for ready reference and compliance, the circular reads further.

"All standard SOPs and protocol in vogue for prevention and safeguard against spread of COVID-19 pandemic as communicated from time to time should be strictly adhered to."

## Rajouri BJP Leader Dies After Returning From Kumbh Mela

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Former Jammu and Kashmir legislator and Minister of State Thakur Pura Singh passed away on Thursday.

Thackeray, 75 years old, joined the BJP after spending some time in the Congress. Succeeding as an independent candidate, Thackeray represented the assembly constituency in Darhal till 2002, after which he joined the Congress and was made Minister of State.

Thakur joined the Bharatiya Janata Party in 2014. Thakur,

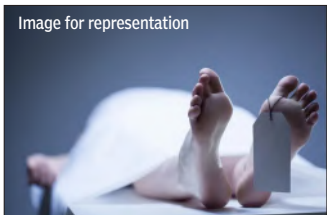


Image for representation

a resident of Badal in Badhal area in Rajouri district, had recently returned from attending a religious gathering known as Kumbh Uttarakhand. After which he fell ill and breathed his last on Thursday.

**'BUREAUCRACY HINDERING DEVELOPMENT'**

## Elected Representatives Of Kupwara Threaten Mass Resignation

Seek LG's Intervention

Image for representation



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The elected representatives of northern Kashmir's Kupwara district including the Panch's, Sarpanch's, and DDC Chairpersons and vice-chairpersons Thursday threatened 'mass resignation' in case the government failed to look into the issues elected representatives have been facing for the past one and half years.

Joined by Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) National Youth President, Sanjay Saraf, protesting Panch's and Sarpanch's alleged that crores of rupees lapsed as the district administration failed to utilise funds sanctioned by the centre and UT government for the development

of district Kupwara.

Protesters said disciplinary action should be initiated against them in case the district administration cast doubts on their honesty. Protesting Panch's and Sarpanch's had assembled at the Press Enclave and sought LG's attention towards the 'messy' situation of all blocks in Kupwara.

"Not a single work has been done for the last one and a half years in Kupwara district. District administration has not utilised a single penny. Why should we put our lives at risk when we are not trusted," Mohammad Ashraf Lone, Sarpanch Dragmaula Kupwara said.

Protesters said the bureau-

cratic rigmaroles have marred the developmental work in district Kupwara while funds released by the centre and UT government could not be properly utilised.

They threatened to go for mass resignation in case the Kupwara administration particularly DC, ADC Kupwara did not stop acting as barriers in development of the frontier district.

"We are public representatives, but we stand nowhere, our opinion is not considered, our orders are ignored, so it's better for us to resign. If the DC and his lieutenant trust JE and BDO more than elected representatives and beat drums of their honesty, then initiate action against us," they added.

Meanwhile LJP national young wing president, Sanjay Saraf urged the Lieutenant Governor to look into the delay in developmental works and reason behind fund lapse in Kupwara.

"We request worthy LG to seek explanation from all the civil servants of district Kupwara for lapse of funds and undue delay into developmental works in Kupwara," Saraf added.

## Wife, Her Paramour Arrested For Murdering Pattan Man

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** More than a month after the death of a 34-year-old man at Renji Pattan, police on Thursday claimed to have worked out the case by arresting his wife and another person, alleged paramour of the woman, in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

A police spokesperson said that on intervening night of 8 and 9 March Mohammad Altaf Malik son Ghulam Rasool Malik, a resident of Seriwarpura was found dead near his cowshed at Renji. "He was buried by family members."

He said on March 22, Altaf's brother submitted application for initiating inquest proceedings as he and his family members were suspicious regarding death of their brother.

Accordingly acting on the orders of District Magistrate Baramulla, the body was exhumed and post mortem was conducted by a panel of doctors from GMC Baramulla. "After the receipt of interim Medical Report and the statements of prime witnesses, the inquest proceedings under section 174 CrPc were converted into FIR (62/2021) under section 302 IPC of police station Pattan."

He said police formed a Special Investigation Team headed by SDPO Pattan.

"The SIT initiated a thorough investigation, activated all source and by using a blend of technical and human intelligence, finally fixed the radar on the wife of the deceased, Tasleema Begum," the spokesperson said.

"She was last seen with the deceased and was put to sustained questioning during which she disclosed the commission of the crime along-with Ghulam Mohammad Dar son of Mohammad Ramzan Dar of Renji."

The duo, the spokesperson said, hatched conspiracy to kill



Image for representation

the deceased a month before the occurrence as "they were in an illegitimate relationship."

"On 8th March both gave a final touch to their plan and accordingly Tasleema called Ghulam Mohammad during night and they both bludgeoned Altaf to death. Thereafter they took the body and threw it near cowshed to conceal the manner of death and camouflage it as death due to slipping," he said, adding, "both the accused have been arrested, weapon of offence recovered on their disclosure and further investigation is in progress."

### NEWS MAKERS

## 'Break The Chain' Goes For A Toss As Over 1.25L Teachers Attend Schools Amid Covid Spike

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** While the administration is trying to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by implementing five pronged strategy—nearly sixty thousands government teachers in Kashmir make their ways to reach respective schools only to teach students through online classes. This has put a question mark on the much touted slogan—"Break the Chain."

Besides the teaching staff nearly 15,000 non-teaching staff is also attending the schools amid surge in COVID-19 cases.

Top officials of the School Education Department said that nearly 1.25 lakh teachers and twenty five thousand non-teaching staff was working in the department

"In Jammu and Kashmir there are more than 23,000 government schools in which nearly 1.25 lakh teachers are posted that include nearly 65,000 in Jammu and 60,000 in Kashmir," the officials said.

Meanwhile, officials of the Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Committee said

that the government departments will function normally.

"As of now, as far as the roast-

**THERE ARE MORE**  
chances of spreading the virus when over one lakh and twenty five thousand teachers leave their homes in the morning to attend schools.

er for half of the attendance of employees is concerned, we have no proposal or plan to devise a mechanism of roasters for the government departments," the official said.

The school education department has the highest number of employees after the police department.

A school teacher said, "There are more chances of spreading the virus when over one lakh teachers at a time are leaving for the schools to attend their duties.

A delegation of teachers said that they are putting their lives

on the line by reaching to their respective schools amid a huge surge in Covid-positive cases. "We are giving online lessons to students from our respective schools. This we can easily do from our homes. Giving online classes from our homes will help break the chain. We urge the government to re-consider the decision of attending schools."

A teacher posted in a government school in HMT area of Srinagar said that one of his colleagues tested positive for the Covid and entire staff had to undergo testing. "We spent one day with the teacher who tested positive. This is strange. Government must take care of our lives too. We can deliver better through online classes from our respective homes rather than rushing to our schools every morning," the teacher said wishing anonymity. He said by staying in homes, the teachers can break the chain. "It is more risky to go out every day and come back after meeting staff members." He urged the government to allow teachers to work from homes—(KNO)

## Covid-19: Restrictions Imposed In Kupwara

Observer News Service

**KUPWARA:** The District Administration Kupwara is successfully implementing the restrictions imposed as per the guidelines of the Government to contain the ill effects of Covid-19 pandemic in the district.

The Magistrates, police officers and Team ARTO were seen on roads to implement the restrictions across the district.

50 percent shops in all towns of Kupwara district including town Kupwara, Handwara, Tangdhar, Trehgam, Kralpora, Wil-

gam, Langate, Drugmulla, Sogam and Lalpora were seen closed today, following the orders issued by District Magistrate Kupwara.

Likewise public transport was seen plying only at 50 percent of its authorised seating capacity.

Night curfew is also being implemented in letter and spirit in all the 3 Municipal Committees of the district, viz, Kupwara, Handwara and Langate.

People have been asked to follow the restrictions as per the guidelines of the Government, avoid venturing out unnecessarily, ensure usage of masks, sanitizers and maintain social distance everywhere.

## SKUAST-K Bags Rs 4 Cr Grant For Honey Testing Labs

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Kashmir has received a Rs 4-crore grant from the National Bee Board (NBB) for setting up three honey testing laboratories, training farmers for beekeeping and conducting apiculture research.

The grant has been awarded to the SKUAST-K's Research and Training Centre for Pollinators, Pollinizers and Pollination Management, Division of Entomology for undertaking six honeybee projects. The centre is a dedicated Centre of Excellence at the university for the research and development and extension for apiculture and pollination ecosystem services by the honey bees and its management for the production of temperate field and horticultural crops.

Apart from two projects on scientific beekeeping training in Kupwara and Baramulla districts, the potential of research studies in beekeeping under low-temperature conditions of Gurez, the grant includes setting up of three honey testing laboratories in Pulwama, Kupwara and Bandipora districts.

Head of the university's pollination centre and in charge of the projects, Prof Manzoor Ah-

mad Paray, said the three state-of-the-art testing laboratories to be set up under the projects will be the first of its kind in Kashmir to check the quality and purity of honey and other bee products.

The testing for the quality and branding of honey in the aparies will be undertaken in these laboratories. The purity and quality certification from these laboratories will facilitate the marketing and export of the Kashmir honey.

The projects will also cater to the needs of the farmers and unemployed youth for training on Scientific Beekeeping in these apiculture potential districts of the Union Territory.

The funding has been granted under National Beekeeping and Honey Mission by the National Bee Board (NBB), Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare, Government of India.

SKUAST-K has also won one more project under the competitive grants component of NICRA, ICAR, New Delhi on, 'Impact of Climate Change on Honeybees and Innovative Strategies to Conserve them for Pollination Services in Temperate Crops' with an outlay of Rs 45 lakhs by Dr Shahnawaz A Dar of KVK, Pulwama.

## Bandipora-Gurez, Srinagar-Leh Roads Shut After Fresh Snowfall

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Authorities on Thursday restricted the movement of traffic on Bandipora Gurez road after fresh snowfall in the region.

Officials said that Gurez valley received fresh snowfall resulting in a considerable dip in the maximum temperature.

He said that snowfall started in Gurez at around 6 am, following which the traffic movement on Bandipora-Gurez road was restricted.

He said that the Srinagar-Kargil highway was also closed again due to snowfall along Zojila pass.



File Pic

The official said that following the improvement in the weather conditions, the Border Roads Organisation will press into service its men and machinery for snow clearance so that these roads are restored for traffic.

## Police Arrest 9 Persons For Violating Covid SOP, Register 7 FIRs

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Police arrested 9 persons in the last 24 hours, lodged 7 FIRs and also realised a fine to the tune of Rs. 194,870/- from 778 people for violating the covid SOP.

A police spokesperson said that the special drive against the violators of Covid-19 guidelines continued throughout all the districts of Kashmir Valley. In Baramulla, two coaching centres were found in violation of SOPs/guidelines issued by the district administration and were accordingly closed till further orders. Meanwhile, in Kupwara a large public gathering/congregation was booked for violating the SOPs/guidelines by not maintaining social distancing.

## Military Widows Felicitated In Doda

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Indian Army on Thursday conducted a felicitation ceremony for 36 military widows, called "Veer Naris", in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir, said an official statement.

The Indian Army collaborated with War Widows Association to conduct this ceremony wherein "a cheque of Rs 10,000 was presented" to the 36 widows, it noted.

One "Veer Mata" - mother whose son was killed in action as an Army personnel - was also present on this occasion on Thursday, it stated.

The ceremony took place at Bhaderwah town of Doda district, it said. Medical check up of aforementioned 37 women, who were present at the occasion, was done, it noted.

Damayanti V Tambay, President War Widows Association, wife of Flight Lieutenant Vijay Vasant Tambay who is missing in action since 1971 Indo-Pak War, graced the event, it said. The event was organised with full COVID-19 prevention and protocol, it noted.



## 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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### K O V I E W

## Get priorities right

India has now crossed three lakh coronavirus cases over the last 24 hours and given that contagion shows no signs of abating, the country could soon be headed to four lakh mark. India now lags only the US in the total number of infected. As for the daily tally, India has surpassed the US' highest one-day rise of 297,430 cases posted in January. In Covid-19 related fatalities, India is now approaching the two-lakh figure. This is a very grim situation to be in. Making things appear even worse is that the union government appears helpless as the demand for hospital beds, medical oxygen and the medicine grows. The healthcare infrastructure is at a breaking point. The viral videos of the people gasping for breath and the distraught families looking for medical attention paint an apocalyptic picture.

As things stand, centre is being largely blamed for this "brutal second wave" besides a "double mutant" strain. The leaders of the BJP including the Prime Minister Narendra Modi have until recently been engaged in addressing the super-spreader election rallies in the four states going to polls. Besides, the centre also gave a go-ahead to Kumbh mela in Uttar Pradesh attended by lakhs of pilgrims.

In Jammu and Kashmir too, the situation is bleak. More so, in Kashmir Valley where the numbers of fresh cases are well past the record of the last year. The summer capital Srinagar has been consistently recording the maximum number of cases in the union territory. There are reasons to believe that the holding of cultural events and the arrival of tourists in large numbers has played a role in the new surge. This is already overburdening the healthcare facilities. But far from being focussed on the unprecedented crisis at hand, the administration is concerned with surveilling its employees. A full-fledged task force headed by an ADGP has been created to scrutinize the employees involved in alleged anti-national activities, of whom there must be a very insignificant number out there. Whatever the rationale for the administration to create such a force, this time the Covid-19 crisis should have been the focus of its attention. A task force should have been created to enforce Covid-19 Standard Operating Procedure in public life, to ensure our medical facilities are sufficiently equipped and staffed to meet the challenge. But that doesn't seem to be the priority as of now. A tiny number of allegedly anti-national government employees are. It is time for the administration to get its priorities right and attend to the crisis unfolding around us Employees' issue can wait for now.

### O T H E R O P I N O N

## Civil Society Steps in

As India battles the most devastating public health crisis it has ever seen, and systemic failures are apparent all around, there is one silver lining — the role of civil society in aiding citizens. Civil society here is not just the conventionally understood structure of established professional organisations or neighbourhood civic bodies. A more loose, spontaneous, conglomeration of disparate citizens is playing an equally critical role in helping fellow citizens.

During the first wave of Covid-19, many such citizens and groups came together to support the returning migrants. This year, too, they are doing a lot of the heavy lifting — from sharing information about hospital beds and medicines to amplifying the needs of patients and their families on social media. Society, samaaj, is leveraging its power to help neighbours, friends, and extended families. A lot of this is restricted to people with access to social media, but it has still been of great help.

While information on beds, medicines and oxygen is critical, what is equally important for patients and their families is to know that there is a community out there that cares, and the battle against Covid-19 will not be a lonely one. But civil society, in any form, doesn't have the scale and the reach of the State. It is imperative that the government aids this Herculean effort by providing correct and timely information to society and meeting the scarcity and shortages across the country.

Hindustan Times



# On Corporal Punishment

Why Defending the Jailed Teacher is  
the Real Tragedy for Society

Dr. Huzaifa Pandit

**“The classroom doesn’t allow hierarchies, instead it is a democratic space rather than an autocratic space. The impulse to control and exclude stems actually from the doctrine of discipline, which we hold sacrosanct, since we internalize it at school. It is unfortunate that in this day and age the doctrine is still being upheld**

In Kashmir, violence is the norm rather than an exception, and therefore it is no surprise that it percolates down to the most minute aspects of our lives. Why then did the recent incident of a teacher at Parraypora slapping a student thirty-one times attract such condemnation and debate? One reason perhaps that may be advanced is that despite violence being routine, we have not yet lost our ability to be shocked. Be that as it may, the incident surprisingly attracted a spirited defense of the teacher in question too, with many jumping to his defense, and in the same vein a badly written article appeared in Kashmir Life titled “Why Jailing a teacher is a tragedy for a society”. The article listed the reasons why punishing the teacher is a tragedy, squarely laying the blame on the victim, and to illustrate his point further adds an autobiographical touch to augment his argument. Besides the obvious fact that the author is a teacher himself, the article is disturbing for several reasons including its tacit approval of moral policing, judging students, and glorifying violence against students.

The article commences with a wild accusation that people who have never been to school are commenting against the teacher. The accusation itself is baseless, as many people including a lot of my acquaintance who went to school, commented on the issue. Besides, does the author personally know everyone who commented on the issue? The bizarreness of the claim aside, the claim is disturbing on another level. It privileges formal education over life experience, and establishes it as a sole arbiter of societal transactions. In other words, the author is claiming that only ‘literate’ people have the right to comment on the issue, and correspondingly illiterate people must stay silent. Not only is this exclusionary, and anti-democratic in tenor, but also terribly elitist. It conveniently ignores the fact that access to school education is not a natural fact, but determined by a host of social factors including class, caste, geography and privilege. Millions are deprived of schooling simply because they can’t afford it. Should we conveniently ignore them, and silence them because they aren’t literate? Are schools the only mediators of knowledge? Ironically, our educational system especially schooling hardly encourages any critical re-

flection, and relies on an assembly line production system to churn out high school graduates who are ill equipped to intervene and solve the challenges of our society.

The article then highlights the hairstyle of the “vulgar student” who deserved a beating because he did not seek permission from the teacher to enter the classroom. This argument reminded me of an anecdote narrated to me by a friend whose cousin was thrashed by security forces just because he happened to have long hair. I hope the author notices the parallels. The defense sets a dangerous precedent where a person will be judged and treated solely on the basis of his appearance, and caters dangerously close to stereotyping, which is the bane of civilized discourse. Moreover, both the hairstyle and seeking permission defense are premised on the erroneous notion of the teacher being an authority figure in a class, which is seen as a space of subservience. The students and the teacher are seen in an unequal power relation – the teacher being the superior and students his inferiors, and all knowledge transfer being a unilateral one, from teacher to students. Hence, the need to ask permission and maintenance of decorum. Nothing could be further from the teacher. A classroom is a transactional space where the teacher is just one part of the learning equation. True learning happens only with the consent and participation of the students, whose cooperation and goodwill the teacher relies on to share his knowledge. The classroom doesn’t allow hierarchies, instead it is a democratic space rather than an autocratic space.

The impulse to control and exclude stems actually from the doctrine of discipline, which we hold sacrosanct, since we internalize it at school. It is unfortunate that in this day and age the doctrine is still being upheld. First discipline belongs to the army, not to school since the school is not an apparatus of coercion. Second, the anxiety to discipline is actually a byproduct of the impulse to hegemonize and ensure complicity to the norm. Norms are only created to ensure the status quo of power structures, and so dissent or questioning of the norm is penalized. The insistence on ‘decent’ hairstyle and appearance is merely a cover for suppressing the individuality and expression of the student, since it is imperative that the student be

unaware of his own power to question and dissent against the establishment. Were a student to realize his expression, it is not a stretch of imagination to conclude that they will question the schism between curriculum and the world, and so the whole system will collapse. History is replete with instances of student power, and perhaps the author might take the trouble of examining Kashmir’s history which has been indelibly marked by ‘truant’ students, who refused to seek permission.

One could go on and on and examine the other claims of the author including his labelling of the student who filmed the incident as ‘vulgar’. The OED defines vulgar as either ‘lacking sophistication’ or ‘asking explicit and offensive reference to sex or bodily functions’. I cannot reconcile the act of recording the beating to either meaning. Conventional wisdom dictates that remaining silent in the face of grave injustice is ‘vulgar’, but perhaps the author believes otherwise. I will conclude this response with an autobiographical account, since the author has relied on his personal experience to justify his position. As a young child, and adolescent both, I was the recipient of harrowing abuse by teachers. In my adolescence, one gentleman slapped me multiple times for requesting half a mark more in a mathematics paper before the whole class, and another lady combined slaps with pulling my hair for glancing into her class while walking in the corridor. As a child, I was constantly threatened with electrocution by the teacher, and had my nose broken when the teacher flung a table at me for a small mistake of misidentifying the time on the clock. It took extensive counselling, and considerable expense to reconcile to the anger and trauma that the incidents left. Neither incident helped me grow, in fact created impediments in my growth as a person. The author would be better advised to introspect, and talk to child psychologists to understand why his ‘half-baked’ defense is the real tragedy in the situation.

*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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## Consider Vaccination

It has been said by Doctors that the best vaccine is the one that is available. As of now, in India, there are two vaccine options available; Covaxin and Covishield. Even then a lot of people in Kashmir are still vary of getting vaccination. Vaccine skepticism is not new. The current one is because many have exaggerated the side effects of vaccines. Some side-effects to a vaccine

are expected, but these are usually mild, including a sore arm, tiredness and a bit of a temperature.

If you have underlying conditions, you can consult your doctor or a GP (general physician) and see if you can get vaccinated. You can also ask your GPs general protocols you would need to follow, after or before vaccination, if at all. If your parents and grandparents are apprehensive

of getting a vaccine, it would be best to fix an appointment with a doctor and let them reassure them. This will help them be more willing.

In case any of your relatives have also received vaccination, you can ask them to share their experience with your elders. This will also help them prepare mentally.

Do not postpone getting a vaccine if you are eligible by age and

your doctor has given you an approval. Although vaccines won’t prevent you from getting an infection, it has shown to decrease the severity of the infection. Sure, there are new variants but let’s have professionals deal with that. If you can get vaccinated, avail what is available.

*Tania Saeed  
tanias@rediffmail*



Mindful Fridays

# Improving Mental Health

Syed Mujtaba

One of the most progressive approaches to improve mental health is the cross sectional integration of mental health promotion and treatment. Finances spent on mental health are seen as costs but there is a need to move fast and invest more in mental health programmes during the pandemic and beyond

There can be no health without mental health, despite this clear evidence nowhere in the world does mental health enjoy parity with physical health in budgets, policies and practice. According to the World Health Organisation, Mental Health Atlas, globally it is estimated that less than 7 percent of health budgets is allocated to address mental health. Persons with mental illnesses constitute a vulnerable section of society and families bear financial hardship, emotional and social burden of providing treatment and care for their relatives with mental illnesses.

WHO defines health as, “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights provides a legally binding framework for the right to the highest attainable standard of mental health. The same is complemented by International legal standards by the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities, the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Children.

#### Magnitude of the Problem

Even prior to the COVID 19 pandemic, the world was not equipped to respond to mental health needs of the population. In 2020, WHO stated that the critical mental health services had been disrupted, fully halted in 93% of countries world wide. Globally, close to one billion individuals are living with a mental disorder. Despite these numbers, many do not have access to mental health care services. As per one research, it has been estimated that 76-85% of those living with a mental disorder in low and middle income countries do not receive treatment. an estimated 12 billion productive days are lost each year due to depression and anxiety, which results in about US 1 trillion economy loss per year in productivity.

#### Mental health in Kashmir

According to Mental health experts, there has been an increase in the number of stress, PTSD, depression related cases in the valley and these psychological problems have also given rise to general health problems like hypertension, cardiac arrests etc. The survey of 2015 revealed that around 1.8 million adults in Kashmir valley have significant symptoms of mental distress, nearly 1.6 million adults in the valley are living with significant symptoms of depression, with 415,000 meeting all the diagnostic criteria for severe depression. Approximately, 1 Million adults in the valley



are living with significant symptoms of anxiety related disorders. The survey also revealed high rates of co-morbidity in the Kashmiri adult population, with nearly 90 percent of individuals identified as a probable case for PTSD. The evidence suggests that the prevalent conflict has a powerful effect on the mental health of people in the valley. So there is a need to burden the evidence in conflict zones to examine all psychosocial dimensions of mental health.

Furthermore, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, crores of people have been pushed to the confinement of their houses across the world, but in Kashmir the ongoing unrest since decades and now the present pandemic, has impacted the mental health of Kashmiris irrespective of gender and age group. Various surveys have revealed that mental illnesses are on rise due to Covid-19 situation in Kashmir.

#### Conclusion

In 2013, the WHO comprehensive Mental Health Action plan recognised mental health as a global health priority. The right to mental health requires that mental health care be integrated into all levels of general health care and services, professionally and practically. And the same has been incorporated in the New Legislation Mental Health care Act 2017. Despite having the legisla-

tion and schemes for mental health care, there is need to make provisions for more number of psychiatrists, psychologists, and mental health institutions. There is a need to increase budget and increase investment in community based mental health initiatives. The effective realization of the right to mental health requires participation, non-discrimination, accountability and availability, accessibility, acceptability quality of mental health care and services.

One of the most progressive approaches to improve mental health is the cross sectional integration of mental health promotion and treatment. Finances spent on mental health are seen as costs but there is a need to move fast and invest more in mental health programmes during the pandemic and beyond. There is a need for a greater push to advance the prevention and care of mental illness and promotion of mental health and it is time for us to assert vigorously that health care, inclusive of mental health treatment, is indeed a Human Right.

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

The author is Working as a Child Rights Lawyer with specialisation in Mental Health Rights

## Coping with Stress as a Mom During COVID-19

When the world shut down March 13, 2020 due to COVID-19, everyone's worlds turned upside down. But for moms, life became challenging on so many additional levels. Moms were suddenly expected to not only continue carrying out the duties and requirements from their jobs outside the home, but be involved in every aspect of their child's day-to-day life. In addition to our work responsibilities, we became the teacher, the daycare provider, the playmate, the short order cook, the housekeeper, and all the other responsibilities that come with being a mom and part of a family.

And it was hard – like really, really, really hard. But when the world shut down, we told ourselves we just had to get through two weeks. And then it became a month. And then two months. The goalposts just continued to move and move.

Yet, here we are a year later, and so much is still the same.

#### COVID Fatigue Is Real

So many moms are still having to wear all the hats (work hat, chef hat, educator hat, etc.), while also navigating the numerous challenges COVID-19 brings to daily life. Many of us are experiencing COVID fatigue and feeling burnt out from parenting during a pandemic. And let me validate those feelings: This burnout is real.

Every day can feel like we're having to figure out a new routine: “Are we working from home this week?” “Is the daycare now closed? For how long?”

“There was a positive test at school, so now we have to quarantine for how long? Oh, and where do we get tested?” “Is it a virtual classroom day or an in-person learning day?”

Every day, week, and month we are having to pivot, shift, and adjust. And yes, this is teaching us new skills in learning to be flexible, but after doing this for a year, it's getting old! Am I right?!

With every new routine, we have to figure out, one of the hardest parts is not knowing how long that routine will last. If we could say, “I only have to do this until this date,” we could find ways to cope help us through this very specific time, and it would give us hope and encouragement that we only have a specified amount of time we have to continue with the stress and overwhelm.

Unfortunately, that's not the world we currently exist in. Shutdown orders continue to shift and change as the risk of the pandemic goes up and down, and the uncertainty of routine will continue



until the virus is greatly under control.

#### How Moms Can Cope With COVID Burnout

So how are we supposed to cope as moms with the stress and burnout from COVID-19?

I'm not going to pretend that there is an easy solution, or that any combination of things will make life automatically better during this very difficult time. But utilizing one or several of these coping strategies may be able to give you a brief reprieve or help decrease the mental exhaustion of parenting during COVID, if even for a moment.

#### Go For a Walk Outside

Getting outside can help with your mental health in several ways. The fresh air and sunshine can naturally lift your mood. Going for a walk, whether by yourself or even with your kids, can be a body-calming experience. The rhythm of your feet hitting the pavement gives your body bilateral stimulation, which can lower your body's stress response.

Depending on where you live, the weather may be really cold this time of year. As long as the temperature is not at a dangerous level to be outdoors, bundle up and get outside. Even just a few minutes in the fresh air can be beneficial in decreasing your body's response

So many moms are still having to wear all the hats (work hat, chef hat, educator hat, etc.), while also navigating the numerous challenges COVID-19 brings to daily life. Many of us are experiencing COVID fatigue and feeling burnt out from parenting during a pandemic. And let me validate those feelings: This burnout is real

to stress.

#### Monthly Zoom Book Club or Coffee Chats

You may be over having to meet with people through a computer screen as COVID-19 has made socialization extremely challenging. But maybe some-

thing a little different is in order. Get a couple friends together and schedule either a monthly Zoom book club or monthly coffee hangouts. Having a dedicated time that is meant just for you and doesn't require you to be in mom mode or work mode can help provide some mental and physical separation from the stress of COVID life.

A group of my fellow mom friends started a book club right before COVID started, and we began meeting monthly online once the shutdown began. We've now met for over a year and this monthly meeting has been a highlight for each of us during the pandemic and has provided each of us with an outlet for socialization in the midst of such a trying time.

#### Get Moving

Exercise has been shown to help with decreasing symptoms of anxiety and depression. COVID-19 has forced us to get more creative with getting physical movement into our days as gyms may be closed and many group exercises are canceled. But finding ways to still get movement or exercise into your day can help give you something consistent to follow in the midst of a world that is full of change right now.

YouTube is filled with a variety of

amazing exercise videos including basic stretching, Pilates, yoga, HIIT, and weighted workouts. Use these free resources to find workouts that feel good for you and will help give you a moment to get your body moving.

#### Give Yourself Permission to Be a Mess

As moms, we often have ideas of what we “should” or “shouldn't” be or do. And we are so good at setting such high – oftentimes unrealistic – expectations of how we should be parenting, regardless of the circumstances. This time in the world and in our families is full of uncertainty and turmoil, so it is completely understandable if you feel like you're falling apart. It is okay if you feel like you can't keep things together. So instead of beating yourself up, remind yourself that you are doing the absolute best you can during an extremely hard time.

#### Try Tapping

When we experience chronic stress and anxiety, our bodies are continuously flooded with high cortisol levels and it can be very challenging to relax. Using a technique called tapping can help to calm the body. By tapping on certain points on the body, the central nervous system can be stimulated in a way that helps decrease cortisol levels and calm the body. Learning how to tap can provide you with a coping technique you can utilize whether you're feeling overwhelmed because of work, your mom duties, or general anxiety about COVID-19. Check out The Tapping Solution to learn how.

#### Talk with an Online Therapist About Your COVID Burnout

It cannot be overstated how important it is to try to care for your mental and emotional health as a mom during COVID-19. There are so many responsibilities and challenges constantly being thrown at you that having someone to help you process your thoughts and feelings around these can be extremely beneficial. Working with an online therapist can allow you to process the stress and anxiety you are experiencing from COVID-19 while also giving you tools and resources to cope with these mental health challenges. Online therapy allows you to have the benefits of counseling without having to stress overexposure to COVID-19 since you can conveniently meet with your online counselor from your computer or phone.

Ashley Comegys



# Indian bosses blame long hours for mental health issues, employees blame bosses

Press Trust Of India

Most employers feel long erratic working hours is the top aspect leading to mental health issues, while majority of employees have put the role of leadership as the top factor, according to a survey. Employers and employees contradict each other on factors of influence, as 77 per cent of the employers surveyed point to long, erratic and always-on-work hours as the top factor, and play down the role of leadership, according to human capital solutions and services provider Gi Group's study 'All in the Mind: the state of mental health in Corporate India'.

It showed that 79 per cent of the employees put the role of leadership right on top of the factors.

The study was done among 1,088 employee respondents and 368 employer respondents from leading small-, medium- and large-scale businesses based out of Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR and Pune.

It has been done keeping the employee, employer and the human resource depart-



ment in consideration and has inputs from experts from the fields of psychology and emotional wellness.

The study further found that the top concerns that lead to mental health issues, as perceived by employers are work-life bal-

ance, work-related stress and anxiety over career growth.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a mixed bag for issues concerning mental wellness and awareness and accessibility leapfrogged and taboos significantly diminished, it said.

However, only a small proportion of employers were more in control of their mental health with 29 per cent of the employees surveyed suffered due to erratic work schedules and 21 per cent suffered due to reduced salaries, it said.

Meanwhile, the employers interviewed stated that they understood the fall-out of mental health issues as 70 per cent of all employers believed that mental health has a serious (45 per cent) or significant (25 per cent) impact on organisational performance or growth.

About 30 per cent believed that there is insignificant or negligible impact on either performance or growth, it stated.

However, the study found that organisational policies and mechanisms do not effectively address mental health concerns in an overwhelming majority of cases.

Only 14 per cent of the employers surveyed were found to have policies and

mechanisms receptive to mental wellness cases, it said. About 54 per cent of the respondents have not put formal policies and mechanisms in place and deal with mental wellness concerns in their informal ways, it added.

A large proportion of the employers surveyed (82 per cent) are sensitising their organisations to be receptive to mental health concerns, 63 per cent are opening up multiple channels for people to speak up and 51 per cent encourage healthy interpersonal equations between people, it added.

Information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services (64 per cent) and banking, financial services and insurance (57 per cent) are among the top sectors on awareness levels on mental health, with fast-moving consumer goods (50 per cent) and automobile (53 per cent) industry faring at the bottom-end, it noted.

On the cities with high awareness on the topic, southern capitals like Chennai (63 per cent) and Bengaluru (57 per cent) score better than the rest while Delhi-NCR (50 per cent) is at the bottom of the list when it comes to awareness on mental health, it added.

## Google introducing new UI, auto zoom and more in Meet app

Agencies

Google has announced to introduce new innovations in its Meet app like a refreshed user interface (UI), autozoom, enhanced reliability features powered by the latest Google AI and tools that make meetings more engaging.

Beginning next month, desktop and laptop users will see a new, richer user interface with an array of easy-to-access features that make meetings more productive and inclusive.

The new Meet for web encompasses updates to video feeds, the viewing and presenting experience, and the bottom bar.

"In an effort to reduce meeting fatigue, we're giving you more control over how you view yourself in meetings," the company said in a statement late on Wednesday.

You can choose to have your video feed be a tile in the grid or a floating picture, which can be resized and repositioned.

If you prefer not to see yourself at all, you can easily minimise your feed and hide it from your own view entirely.

"We'll also be adding a setting to enable you to turn off your self-feed across all Google Meet calls," the company said.

To boost presenter confidence during meetings, Google

has also improved the pinning and unpinning of content.

When unpinned, the presentation tile becomes the same size as other participant tiles, allowing you to see more people on the call and better gauge reactions.

"Similarly, in the coming months, we'll deliver options for customising your view in Google Meet, including the ability to pin multiple video feeds. This will provide greater flexibility in how you combine people and content, adjusting for whatever you care about most in the moment," Google said.

Besides, Google introduced another AI-powered feature to keep the focus on people during meetings.

Autozoom helps other people see you more clearly by using AI to zoom in and position you squarely in front of your camera.

"If you move, Autozoom intelligently readjusts, so everyone in your team can stay focused on what matters. Autozoom will be available to Google Workspace (paid) subscribers in the coming months," the company said.

The company has also updated the bottom bar in Meet app to make meetings easier to navigate.

In the coming weeks, Google will also add the ability to replace your background with a video.

## Affordable And Easy Gen Z Fashion Trends

Sponsored Feature

Summer'2021 is here and we couldn't be more ready for it! With new fashion trends coming in so rapidly, it's getting hard to keep track, isn't it?

This year's summer fashion trends are to die for! After last year's summer spent at home doing nothing, this year's summer hits differently. Everybody needs to up their fashion game and keep up with the newest Gen Z fashion trends. Updating your wardrobe with the latest fashion upgrades can be a bit hard on your budget. However, with online shopping, affordable fashion has now become a thing.

Many online platforms like Myntra, Ajio, Amazon, etc. offer huge discounts on different brands and clothes to make your shopping experience more budget-friendly. Currently, Myntra is offering discounts worth 40-70% in the form of Myntra coupons and promo codes as a part of its epic fashion sale. In addition, you can redeem perks like free shipping coupons and offers of up to 90% on Flipkart Fashion, applicable to all major categories like clothing, accessories, bags, footwear, and more. New users can redeem special benefits at Ajio and get an extra 20% off on their first purchase.

So if you're looking for ways to sort your summer clothing list in a budget-friendly way, we've got you covered. Here are some of the fashion trends of 2021 that you can follow without thinking twice about the budget:

**Oversized Clothes**

Oversized clothing has been a recurring fashion trend ever since it first became popular. Oversized shirts, t-shirts and tops are the trendiest summer fashion collection that one must add to the wardrobe

this summer! The oversized fashion collection is easily available everywhere. Online shopping platforms offer discounts and deals so you can save more and shop in a budget-friendly way, so it's better to shop online to get more products at affordable prices.

**Baggy jeans**

The baggy jeans trend is also one of the must-haves for this summer's fashion list. Baggy jeans give a very retro and chic look to the whole outfit. Among Gen Z, the most worn type of jeans today is baggy jeans. Skinny fit is still in fashion but the Gen z prefers baggy fits over skinny fits. You can get the best pair of baggy jeans at Myntra because of the availability of many brands and a variety of jeans to choose from. With discounts being offered by Myntra, you can get your favourite pair of jeans at an affordable price!

**Ruched tops and Dresses**

For all the ladies out there, the best fashion trend of summer 2021 is definitely the ruched style. Ruched tops and dresses have a very trendy look and these have become very popular among Gen Z in recent times. Especially satin ruched dresses. They have a very elegant look and can be your go to outfit for a party! Ruched tops and dresses are available everywhere at the moment. You can get a wide variety to choose from and get it in your favourite colour or style this summer!

**Flared Jeans**

Along with baggy jeans, flared jeans have also become very popular nowadays. The flared jeans look is a very outgoing look. Flared jeans are very easy to carry and comfortable too. It is by far one of the best fashion trends that everybody should hop on. You can get a pair of flared jeans at

stores like H&M, levis, etc.

**Pastel Monochrome outfits**

Having a huge variety of colours to choose from, it can be hard to find what suits you the most. To make it easier, the pastel colours Gen Z summer trend is here. Pastel colours are really light so they can be worn easily on summer days. Styling Monochrome outfits has become popular in the last few years and it is still one of the easiest fashion trends to ever exist. Monochrome outfits can be styled easily and can be bought online at prices that are really budget-friendly. You just need to find the right store or shopping platform to get the trendy pastel colours for your monochrome outfits and you're good to go!

**Chunky Sneakers and Loafers**

The Nike Air Jordan 1s are the most popular sneakers among Gen Z, but they're not very budget-friendly. The chunky sneaker trend is new and upcoming, but it's still easy to find amazing sneakers at affordable prices to substitute high priced sneakers like the AJ1s. Sneakers go with almost everything and owning a good pair of sneakers can save you from the headache of finding the perfect footwear for every other outfit. You can find amazing and affordable sneakers at Amazon or Ajio as they have a huge variety of brands to choose from!

**Corsets**

In spite of the controversial history, Corsets have been part of the fashion trends for many years. Corsets have made a huge comeback in the recent past and have become the signature top style for girls from the year 2020. Everybody is coming up with different ways to style a corset making it more trendy than ever. Corsets aren't very expensive and hard to

find, so having corsets in your fashion collection for this summer is a must.

**Chunky Chains**

Chains have also been in fashion for a long time, but the trend of wearing thick and chunky chains for both men and women has started to become popular again this year. Chains go with all outfits, depending on the thickness and type of chain you're wearing. Chains are also easily available everywhere and are one of the most affordable accessories you could get to up your fashion game this summer.

**Baguette Bags**

All the fashion trends from the early years are subsequently making a comeback and getting really popular among the Gen Z. The vintage baguette bag is the new favourite accessory for the Gen Z. These bags add a spice of the old vintage look to your overall outfit and everybody's loving it! Baguette bags can be expensive depending on the brand you prefer to buy, but it's affordable if you don't go for a very expensive brand. If you want to add the baguette bag to your wardrobe without having to deal with the problem of affordability, go for a local yet good quality one instead!

These fashion trends are never-ending and keeping up with all of them without having it get harsh on your budget isn't easy. It's always better to choose an affordable way of shopping, which very evidently, is online shopping. By taking advantage of the discounts and offers given by the online shopping platforms, you can simply check out everything on your shopping list without having to worry about the budget constraint. So what are you waiting for? Get the best fits for this summer of 2021 by following your favourite fashion trends!

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B ELECTRIC DIVISION SGR

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No: 10/e-tendering of 2021-22/R&B DATED: - 22.04.2021

For and on behalf of the LT Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Electrical Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No.	Name of Work	Est. Cost (In Rupees/lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Time of completion	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor
1	Electrification of Renovation/ Repairs of Electric fittings of Fire & Emergency Building at Kanipora Shopian ( Ground Floor , First Floor and Second Floor )	4.00 lacs	200.00	20 days	29.04.2021	"A" Class Electrical

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	22-04-2021
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	22/04/2021 11.00 A.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	22/04/2021 from 11.00 A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	29/04/2021 up to 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	29/04/2021 at 6.00 P.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division Srinagar

02. Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division , Srinagar (tender inviting authority) (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Electric Division , Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

03. All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form instead of Earnest money as per the circular of Finance Department (Bid Security Declaration Form is as per Annexure "A" below) . The 1st lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/ within 02 Days before fixation of contract and shall be released after successful completion of work.

04. Bidder must read term/condition in tender document carefully.

AAA/TS = Accorded  
Position of Funds = Available

DIPK-692/21

NIT No. 10/e-tendering/ERB/174-81

Executive Engineer,  
(R&B) Electric Division  
Srinagar

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

### Office of the Registrar of Societies and Firms (Directorate of Industries & Commerce, Kashmir)

Subject: Re-registration of Societies registered before 31.10.2019 under J&K Societies Registration Act 1998(Samvat)-1941 AD.

Reference No.: Administrative Department Letter No IND/DIC-169/2007 dated 19.4.2021

**CIRCULAR No.1**

**DATED 20.04.2021**

In reference to the Administrative Department's letter No IND/DIC-169/2007 dated 19.4.2021 on the subject matter, it is hereby directed that the societies registered before 31.10.2019 under J&K Societies Registration Act, 1998 (Samvat) 1941 AD are required to re-register under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 applicable as per the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act-2019 {Notification No 34 of 2019 dated 9<sup>th</sup> August, 2019-GOI}.

In this regard, the Societies registered under Jammu and Kashmir Societies Registration Act-1998 (Samvat) 1941 AD with this office, shall apply for re-registration along-with the following documents within Fourth Five days (45) from the date of issue of the notice, both in hard & soft copies (soft copy to be made available at [ao-industries@jk.gov.in](mailto:ao-industries@jk.gov.in)):

1. Audit report of final account for the year 2019-20.
2. Two sets of Memorandum of Association.
3. Bye-laws along-with List of Managing/Executive Body as per the provisions enshrined in the Societies Registration Act, 1860, which is applicable now.

All existing Societies registered under J&K Societies Registration Act-1998 (Samvat) 1941 AD need to submit above mentioned documents and get themselves re-registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860 within the period of 45 days from the issuance of this circular, failing which action under rules will be taken against them.

DIPK-690/21

No.DI&C/Estt/society/861-64

Sd/-  
(Nazim Zai Khan), KAS  
Registrar of Societies, Kashmir

dt.20.04.2021



# Airlines Face \$47.7 Billion Loss In 2021: Aviation Body



## Agencies

Airlines are forecast to lose \$47.7 billion (39.7 billion euros) this year, worse than previously forecast, a global industry group said Wednesday as the sector struggles to recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

On a brighter note, the International Air Transport Association slightly raised its forecast for global air passenger traffic, saying it would reach 43 percent of pre-pandemic levels.

The IATA had forecast net post tax losses of \$38 billion in December.

"Financial performance will be worse and more varied this year than we expected in our December forecast, because of

difficulties in controlling the virus variants and slower vaccination in some regions," the association said in a report.

Airlines lost more than \$126 billion last year as the Covid-19 crisis prompted countries to lock down cities, close borders and ban international flights.

North American airlines will fare better than previously thought, with losses of \$5 billion instead of \$11 billion, thanks to the recovery of the domestic market there, the IATA said.

But the outlook has worsened in Europe due to a slower vaccination campaign and less easing of international travel restrictions.

European airlines are now tipped to lose \$22 billion, compared to \$12 billion in the earlier forecast.

# 'This Isn't Convenient': HSBC Manager's Heart Attack Spurs Debate



## Agencies

When Jonny Frostick realized he was having a heart attack this month, the first thing that occurred to the HSBC Holdings Plc contractor was: "I needed to meet with my manager tomorrow, this isn't convenient."

Then he thought about funding for a project, his will, and finally, his wife.

Frostick, who manages more than 20 employees working on regulatory data projects, chronicled his near-death experience in a viral LinkedIn post that had been viewed almost 8 million times. The 45-year-old Briton is the latest financial employee to weigh in on the work-till-you-drop culture during a pandemic that's obliterated the lines between office and home life for droves of workers.

"Whereas before I would finish sensibly anywhere between five and half six, I'd be finding myself there on a Friday at 8 o'clock at night exhausted, thinking I need to prep up something for Monday and I haven't got time, and I started then to actually work weekends," Frostick said in a phone interview from his home in Dorset. "That's my responsibility. I think that was probably for me where it was those blurring of boundaries."

"We all wish Jonathan a full and speedy recovery," said HSBC

spokeswoman Heidi Ashley. "The response to this topic shows how much this is on people's minds and we are encouraging everyone to make their health and wellbeing a top priority."

Frostick said he and colleagues spend a disproportionate amount of time on Zoom calls, and work days can stretch to 12 hours. The isolation of remote work also takes a toll, he said.

"We're not able to have those other conversations off the side of a desk or by the coffee machine, or take a walk and go and have that chat," he said. "That has been quite profound, not just in my work, but across the professional-services industry."

The former construction worker took a different path into finance than many of his peers. A native of Bournemouth, an English coastal town, he worked in his father's building business and didn't get a bachelor's degree until he was 29.

When he arrived in London, the self-described country boy had to learn how to use the Underground subway system, and mixed for the first time with ballet and theater aficionados. From there, he went down a path of intense work that included stints at Accenture Plc, JPMorgan Chase & Co., U.K. government ministries and Deutsche Bank AG. He cultivated a so-called mask to fit into corporate culture.

# Skill Development To Overcome Unemployment In J&K: Dr Samoon



**JAMMU:** Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department, Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon, today chaired a meeting to review the physical and financial progress on projects being executed under CAPEX budget 2020-21 by Skill Development Department.

The meeting was attended by Director Skill Development Department, Sajad Hussain Ganai and other officials of the department while as Principals and Superintendent of Polytechnics and ITIs participated through video conferencing.

The meeting had a detailed review of physical and financial achievements under various projects being undertaken at identified Government Polytechnics and ITIs under CAPEX budget 2020-21. It was informed that Rs. 41 crore have been allocated for various works during 2020-21, out of which, 50 per cent funds are being authorized immediately for expenditure with priority to complete the ongoing projects.

Principal Secretary said that under a joint venture between administration of Jammu and Kashmir and Tata Technologies (PPP mode) an investment of Rs. 361 crore has been made in JKUT to train the students in robotics, electric vehicle manufacture, industry professionals and promoting entrepreneurship. It was informed in the meeting that Centres for Invention, Innovation, Incubation, and Training (CIIT) have been established at Government Polytechnic, BIKRAM CHOWK, at a cost of Rs 181.56 crore and at Government Polytechnic College, Baramulla at the cost of Rs 181.57 crore. The measures are coming at a time when the dynamics of industry requirements are changing rapidly due to continuous advancements being made in today's global

technological era," he added.

Reiterating the role of Skill Development Department, Principal Secretary said that the department has a pivotal role in overcoming unemployment in the UT.

It was also informed that multiple placement drives and job fairs were conducted last year and near about 5000 polytechnic and ITI pass outs were provided job offer letters in private sectors. Besides, placement and career counseling centers guide such students for further assistance and monitor placements in private sector. Under PMKVY-3, the department has also provided crash course training to 3000 candidates in different trades during Jan 2020 to March 2021.

Principal Secretary directed the concerned executing agencies to complete ongoing projects in tendering and allotment of works till ending May 2021 as stipulated by Finance Department.

**THE MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY DIRECTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT** Department, Sajad Hussain Ganai and other officials of the department while as Principals and Superintendent of Polytechnics and ITIs participated through video conferencing.

# Cotton Futures Up 0.5% To Rs 21,200 Per Bale On Lower Global Stocks

## Agencies

Cotton futures were trading higher at Rs 21,200 per bale on April 22 as participants increased their long positions as seen from open interest. The agri commodity traded in the positive territory after a gap-up start in the evening session.

The soft commodity has been trading higher than 100 and 200 days' moving averages but lower than 5, 20 and 50 days' moving average on the daily chart. The Relative Strength Index (RSI) is at 44.76, which indicates weak momentum in prices.

"Though short term gains could be seen in ICE Cotton, proliferating COVID cases in Asian countries may drag cotton in coming sessions. If ICE Cotton sustains above 86 today, more gains could be expected", said Mohit Vyas, Analyst at Kotak Securities.

Abhijeet Banerjee, Senior Research Analyst-Agri Research, Religare Broking Ltd said, "Cotton complex markets had registered impressive gains in last few sessions. Under a bullish price scenario, the April month's USDA report has added fuel to the market from buyers' perspective. World cotton production is forecast at 113.0 million bales in 2020/21, the smallest in 4 years



and the result of lower harvested area. million bales, equivalent to 22 percent of total usage."

Meanwhile, world cotton stocks (93.5 million bales) are forecast lower in 2020/21, bolstering this season's cotton price expectations.

The global stock reduction is supportive of cotton prices, particularly in an expanding global economy with rising world cotton mill use, he said.

Cotton arrivals across the country in the first half of April plunged below 31,500 tons, down by 70 percent month-on-month. Arrivals are still better than last year when a complete lockdown around the nation brought the arrivals near 3,000 tons, as per Agmarknet data.

MCX April Cotton trades at a discount of 18 percent from Cotlook A

price of 90.20 cents as on Tuesday.

In the futures market, cotton for April delivery touched an intraday high of Rs 21,280 and an intraday low of Rs 21,180 per bale on the MCX. So far in the current series, the commodity has touched a low of Rs 20,340 and a high of Rs 22,760.

Cotton futures for April delivery jumped by Rs 110, or 0.52 percent, to Rs 21,200 per bale at 19:38 hours IST on a business turnover of 3,324 lots. The same for May contract gained Rs 90, or 0.42 percent at Rs 21,520 per bale with a business volume of 6,016 lots.

The value of April and May's contracts traded so far is Rs 70.77 crore and Rs 63.39 crore, respectively.

At 14:10 (GMT), US Cotton futures were slightly up 0.06 percent at 86.28 cents/pound on Intercontinental Exchange (ICE).

# Australia Ends China Deals On National Interest Grounds



## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Australia has cancelled two Chinese "Belt and Road" infrastructure building initiative deals with a state government, provoking an angry response from Beijing.

The bilateral deals with Victoria state were among four vetoed under new laws that give the federal government power to overrule international agreements by lower-level administrations that violate the national interest, Foreign Minister Marise Payne said late Wednesday.

The "Belt and Road" deals struck with Beijing in 2018 and 2019 triggered the legislative response.

Victoria Education Department pacts signed with Syria in 1999 and Iran in 2004 were also cancelled.

"I consider these four arrangements to be inconsistent with Australia's foreign policy or adverse to our foreign relations," Payne said.

The Chinese Embassy in Australia said in a statement the decision "further shows that the Australian government has no sincerity in improving China-Australia relations."

"It is bound to bring further damage to bilateral relations, and will only end up hurting

itself," the embassy said on Thursday, referring to the Australian government.

Global Times, the Chinese Communist Party's English-language mouthpiece, said in a headline: "Australia faces serious consequences for unreasonable provocation against China."

The move "marks a significant escalation that could push icy bilateral relations into an abyss," the newspaper added.

Australia's bilateral relations with its most important trading partner are at their lowest point in decades.

Chinese government ministers refuse to take phone calls from their Australian counterparts, and trade disruptions are widely seen as China imposing economic punishment.

But Payne said on Thursday she did not expect China would retaliate.

"Australia is operating in our national interests. We are very careful and very considered in that approach," Payne told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

"It's about ensuring that we have a consistent approach to foreign policy across all levels of government, and it isn't about any one country," she said.

"It is most certainly not intended to harm Australia's relationships with any countries."

# Delhi HC Directs Strict Compliance Of Centre's Oxygen Allocation Order

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Delhi High Court Thursday directed the Centre to ensure oxygen is supplied to the national capital as per the allocation order and is transported without any hindrance.

The high court said there has to be strict compliance of oxygen allocation order issued by the Centre and non compliance would attract criminal action.

A bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli said the Centre's allocation of oxygen for Delhi from plants in other states like Haryana was not being respected by the local administration there and it needs to be resolved immediately.

It directed the central government to provide adequate security to lorries transporting oxygen and to form dedicated corridors for the same.

The directions came after the Delhi government told the court that oxygen that was to come from Panipat in Haryana was not being allowed to be picked up by the local police there.

The Delhi government also told the court that oxygen which was to be picked up from some units in Uttar Pradesh could also be not lifted from there.

With regard to Delhi government's suggestion to transport oxygen by air, the bench said research by its legal researchers has shown that airlifting



of oxygen was very dangerous and it has to be transported either by road or rail.

Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta told the bench "If there is any roadblock by any individuals or any officers, the officers have been instructed that if they are involved in any such activity they will be departmentally dealt with."

He said if individuals are involved, then protection would be provided to ensure the commitments are met.

"We must respond with a sense of urgency and sense of responsibility which the situation demands," the SG said.

The high court on Wednesday issued strong strictures against the Central government and private industries and had ordered the Centre to "forthwith" provide oxygen by whatever means to hospitals here facing shortage of the gas in treating serious COVID-19 patients, observing it seems human life is not important for the state.

## SHORT TAKES

# HC Dismisses Facebook, Whatsapp Pleas Against CCI Order To Probe Privacy Policy

## PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Delhi High Court on Thursday dismissed pleas by social media platforms—Facebook and WhatsApp—challenging India's competition regulator CCI's order directing a probe into WhatsApp's new privacy policy.

Justice Navin Chawla said though it would have been "prudent" for the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to await the outcome of petitions in the Supreme Court and the Delhi HC against WhatsApp's new privacy policy, but not doing so would not make the regulator's order "perverse" or "wanting of jurisdiction".

The court said it saw no merit in the petitions of Facebook and WhatsApp to interdict the investigation directed by the CCI.



The CCI had contended that it was not examining the alleged violation of individuals' privacy which was being looked into by the Supreme Court.

It had argued before the court that the new privacy policy of WhatsApp would lead to excessive data collection and "stalking" of consumers for targeted advertising to bring in more users and is therefore an alleged abuse of dominant position.

"There is no question of jurisdictional error," it had contended and added that WhatsApp and Facebook's pleas challenging its decision were "incompetent and misconceived".

WhatsApp and Facebook had challenged the CCI's March 24 order directing a probe into the new privacy policy.

CCI had also told the court that only after the investigation can it be determined whether the data collection by WhatsApp and sharing it with Facebook would amount to an anti-competitive practice or abuse of dominant position.

It had also contended that the data collected, which would include an individual's location, the kind of device used, their internet service provider and whom they are conversing with, would lead to creation of a customer profile and

preference which would be monetized by way of targeted advertising and all this amounts to "stalking".

The two social media platforms had contended that when the top court and the Delhi High Court were looking into the privacy policy, then CCI ought not to have "jumped the gun" and intervened in the issue.

They had also said that CCI's decision was an abuse of the commission's suo motu jurisdiction.

They had claimed that the CCI in the instant case has "drifted far away" from the competition aspect and was looking into privacy issue which was already being looked into by the apex court and the Delhi High Court.

In January, the CCI on its own decided to look into WhatsApp's new privacy policy on the basis of news reports regarding the same.

# Samsung Tops Global Smartphone Shipments In Q1

**NEW DELHI:** Samsung defended its leading position in the global smartphone market in the first quarter of the year, shipping 77 million smartphones and capturing 23% market share (a growth of over 32% on-year), according to a new report.

Apple shipped 57 million units of iPhones worldwide, capturing second place with a 17% volume market share.

Xiaomi held third place in terms of volume of smartphones shipped for the second quarter in a row. It shipped 49 million smartphones globally and took a 15% market share in Q1 2021, up from 10% one year ago, according to latest research from Strategy Analytics.

The global smartphone shipments were 340 million units in Q1 2021, up over 24% (on-year) representing the



highest growth since 2015.

The smartphone market rebound was driven by the healthy demand of consumers with ageing devices and a phenomenal 5G push from Chinese vendors.

"Globally, the top five vendors combined took a 76% market share in Q1 2021, up from 71% a year ago. Chip shortages and supply side constraints did not have a significant im-

pact in Q1 among the top 5 brands," said Linda Sui, senior director, Strategy Analytics. Samsung's newly launched A series 4G and 5G phones, and the earlier launched Galaxy S21 series combined drove solid performance in the quarter. Xiaomi maintained strong momentum in both India and China, and the expansion in Europe, Latin America and Africa region also started to bear fruit. — IANS



# KIIT Ranked 201+ Globally in Times Higher Education Impact Rankings

Ranked 86th in 'Reduced Inequalities' Globally

SRINAGAR: Deeds are the best answer to injurious words. That way Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar remains a torch bearer among the fraternity and its achievements don't require a spokesman. KIIT has been placed among the top universities of the world in the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings-2021 announced on 21st April 2021. KIIT's commitment to sustenance and Equity gets recognition by THE.

On the yardsticks of community-based university and impact of university, every year the Times Higher Education conducts rankings of higher education institutions across the globe. As KIIT has been fulfilling all criteria of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, THE has given 201+ rank to KIIT in the overall Impact ranking.



The Impact Rankings of the Times Higher Education evaluates the social responsibility of universities across the world.

Also, It has been ranked 86th in 'Reduced Inequalities' of SDG. For this, it has ranked within 100 universities of the world at least in a single parameter. KIIT has got the rank 101+ in 'Partnership for The Goals' and 201+ in 'Quality Education & Peace and Justice & Strong

Institutions each. It is the only university in eastern India to achieve such an impressive rank. In 2020 KIIT was ranked in 501+. KIIT was also the winner of 'Awards Asia 2020' in the category 'Workplace of the Year' by the Times Higher Education.

The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings are the only global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs). A very comprehensive and balanced comparison across four broad areas like research, stewardship, outreach and teaching was done by the Times Higher Education.

KIIT has been progressing with impressive ranks in quality teaching, research, publication, etc. What is more noteworthy is that KIIT has been carrying out its social responsibility with sincerity and dedication since

its inception.

Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS said that a few institutions and universities are getting featured in the world rankings, which itself is a matter of pride for the state. "We are happy that KIIT Deemed to be University is among the top in the Impact Rankings of the Times Higher Education (THE), as it has tried to maintain excellence in social responsibility.

## Nearly 400 Passengers Flee Silchar Airport To Avoid Covid-19 Testing, Likely To Face Criminal Action

**SILCHAR:** As many as 385 passengers, who landed at the Silchar airport on Wednesday, created disorder and fled the facility to escape mandatory COVID-19 testing, officials said on Thursday, and asserted criminal action will be initiated against them.

Cachar District Additional Deputy Commissioner (Health) Sumit Sattawan said a total of 690 passengers arrived at the airport from various parts of the country aboard six aircraft.

He said they were supposed to undergo swab tests at the airport and the nearby Mahatma Gandhi Model Hospital in Tikal.

Sattawan said hundreds of

passengers created chaos at both places, mainly over payment of Rs 500 for the tests, the government-fixed rate.

The Assam government has made it mandatory for all air passengers arriving in the state to undergo a free Rapid Antigen Test and an RT-PCR test for Rs 500 even if the report of the RAT comes negative. Asserting that the passengers had violated the rules, the officer said, "We have their database and will track them.

We will initiate criminal action under Section 188 of the IPC (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) and other relevant provisions."

The ADC later filed a complaint with the Cachar Superintendent of Police against the violators, seeking initiation of proceedings for flouting government orders and putting the society at risk during the pandemic.

"... A total of 385 passengers skipped mandatory testing at Silchar Airport," he said in the complaint, containing the list of the violators with mobile phone numbers received from flight carriers.

Of the 690 passengers, 189 were tested and six found infected with the virus. Many were exempted from testing as they were transit passengers on

way to neighbouring states like Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura, Sattawan said.

In a statement late on Thursday, Silchar airport director said the incident was not reported inside the airport and "no passenger escaped from security checks or from the designated area at the passenger terminal building".

"However, the matter was related to the screening of the arriving passengers by transporting them from outside the airport, through ASTC buses to the Mahatma Gandhi Model Hospital, Tikal (Salganga). There, both RAT and RT-PCR

tests are being conducted by the district health department," it added.

Quoting Sattawan, the Airports Authority of India release said around 300 passengers moved out of the system without being tested, shouting at health department personnel.

The district health officials and workers were caught off-guard as they didn't anticipate "so much indiscipline" from flight passengers, AAI said.

"... Air passengers escaped from outside Silchar airport or the testing site rather than the airport," it added.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Covid-19- Nearly

Budgam 68, Pulwama 62, Kupwara 54, Anantnag 105, Bandipora 13, Ganderbal 23, Kulgam 35, Shopian 28, Jammu 469, Udhampur 68, Rajouri 45, Doda 27, Kathua 31, Samba 31, Kishtwar 15, Poonch 13, Ramban 39 and Reasi 51 new cases of coronavirus.

There are 16094 actives cases in the J&K—6761 in Jammu and 9333 in Kashmir. Moreover, they said, 791 more COVID-19 patients have recovered—242 from Jammu Division and 549 from the Valley.

Regarding the fresh deaths, they said, two were from Jammu division and six from valley. (With GNS inputs)

### SC Terms Covid-19

"The country is in dire need of oxygen and the Centre is augmenting oxygen from whichever source. Vedanta wants to make its plant operational, but let Vedanta only make it operational to manufacture oxygen for health purposes," Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said. "Between protecting environment and protecting human life, we must lean in favour of protecting human life," Mehta said.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for Vedanta, sought urgent hearing of the plea during the day itself and said people are dying on daily basis and we can produce and supply oxygen to treat COVID-19 patients.

"We can start in five to six days if you give a go ahead today. The company can manufacture tonnes of oxygen there everyday and is ready to supply them free of cost," Salve said.

The Tamil Nadu government, however referred to the records and said no oxygen production can be started by the company before two to four weeks. The bench would hear the interim application on Friday.

The copper unit was closed after a May 23, 2018 order by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board following violent protests against the unit which left 13 people dead in police firing. (PTI)

### SASB Temporarily

the Amarnathji Yatra 2021. It was informed that the situation is being constantly monitored and the registrations will reopen once the COVID spread is reviewed as the situation evolves," an official spokesperson said Thursday.

The board, he said has taken this decision after noting the sharp rise in coronavirus cases "It was also noted that the government has taken a large number of measures to reduce the spread of infection through night curfews, 50% reductions in shop opening, 50% restrictions on public transport passengers, closure of schools and colleges, etc," he said.

According to the official spokesperson, the board had commenced registrations on 1st April, and the arrangements were on track since February, 2021 for a successful conduct of the pilgrimage which is expected to start from 28th June, 2021.

"The decision has been taken to check any unnecessary gatherings," he added.

### Kansal Tests Positive,

positive for the covid-19, sources said. They said Talat's oxygen saturation level fell last night following which he was immediately shifted to the hospital. His condition is said to be stable.

Meanwhile, Principal Secretary Power Development Department and government spokesman Rohit Kansal tested positive for Covid-19.

"After dodging the Coronavirus for the entire last year, I have tested positive today; have some symptoms- but my spirits are high," he

said in a tweet.

### KU Closes Campus

construction division, proctorial wing etc shall continue to perform their duties with full strength, the KU administration said.

Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad Mir said that employees experiencing symptoms of coronavirus are advised to get themselves screened for the infection.

Meanwhile, all the university examinations scheduled on April 23 and April 24 have also been postponed.

"Fresh dates of postponed examinations will be notified later on," Controller of Examinations Prof Irshad A Nawchoo said.

### Dry Weather

a high probability of thunderstorms with lightning in most parts of Kashmir, Ramban-Banihal, Poonch-Rajouri Area during next few hours," he said.

Meanwhile, a MeT department official said that Srinagar received 4.2 mm of rain in the last 24 hours till 0830 a.m. while it recorded a low of 8.6 degree Celsius against 10.4 degree Celsius on the previous night. It was 0.3 degree Celsius below normal in the summer capital of J&K for this time of the season.

Qazigund received 0.2mm of rain during the time and recorded a low of 4.6 degree Celsius against previous night's 7.4 degree Celsius, the official said.

Pahalgam, the famous resort in south Kashmir, received 0.9mm of rain and recorded a low of 3.3 degree Celsius against 5.3 degree Celsius on the previous night, he said.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, received 1.0mm of rain during the time and recorded a low of 3.7 degree Celsius against previous night's 5.8 degree Celsius, the official said.

Kupwara had 11.8 mm of rain and recorded a low of 5.0 degree Celsius against 7.7 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said. Reports said Sadnatop received 5 inch of fresh snow along with Karnah, Keran and Z Gali in Machil in the north Kashmir district.

Gulmarg, the famous skiing resort in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, received 6.8mm of rain and 2cms of snowfall while it recorded a low of minus 0.5 degree Celsius against 1.4 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said.

Reports of snowfall have been also received from Kulan, Gund and Sonamarg areas of

Ganderbal district in central Kashmir besides Drass and Leh in Ladakh. (With GNS inputs)

### Highway Open

stranded vehicles between Nashree and Ramban shall be allowed towards Srinagar. No vehicle shall be allowed from Jammu or Udhampur towards Srinagar," traffic authorities said in a communiqué.

Meanwhile, Mughal road, the only surface link connecting Poonch and Shopian districts, was closed due to snow accumulation.

### Gunmen In Hazmat

search operation in the area and neighbourhood villages to nab the robbers.

Police have registered a case in this regard, an official said.

### HC Reserves Verdict

has already filed reply to clubbed petitions, seeking directions to quash RT0 Kashmir's circular dated March 27, mandating the vehicle owners who have purchased their vehicles bearing outside registration number to apply for a new registration as per the provisions of Section 47/50 of Motor Vehicle Act 1988 within a prescribed period of 15 days, failing which action as warranted shall be initiated against them.

One of petitioners have also sought directions also clarify by way of a circular or order on the issue of levying of tax on the vehicles purchased outside J&K if the previous owner of the vehicle has already paid the tax on the vehicle.

The petitioner also sought directions to clarify by way of circular from which period the tax is to be levied on the vehicles. (GNS)

### Centre Withholds

team of officials from NITI Aayog had also visited the State to inspect works executed under restoration program in Srinagar and Jammu districts.

The "inordinate delay" in release of funds prompted J&K LG Manoj Sinha to raise the matter with the Union Home Minister and Union Finance Minister on December 12.

### Doctors Declare

out-patient department (OPD) services in the wake of the spike in Covid-19 cases in the erstwhile state.

The administration designated various wards including isolation/drug de-addiction centre, paid rooms, MICU, SICU, and disaster management ward as Covid-19 wards.

However, the doctors posted in the hospital have raised the alarm bells regarding the situation and have warned that the situation in Kashmir may be like other states of India where the virus has wreaked havoc.

"If people of Kashmir could witness what we are dealing with right now in SMHS, they wouldn't come out of their houses," posted Dr. Aatif Sanaie, another Junior Resident Medicine of the hospital on his twitter account.

Reacting to the tweet, mechanical engineer Tahir Peerzada, replied, "It's a horrifying situation.

I have been fighting it out since 15 days, with people infected. Please don't take it easy, stay home as far as you can. The situation is really alarming."

Dr. Sanaie told Kashmir Observer that, although the admin converted almost 50% for covid 19 positive/suspected patients, however they are getting filled rapidly.

"And it's scary to see more patients below 40 with pneumonia every day. The oxygen demand is increasing," he said. "If the situation remains the same, Kashmir will be another Delhi and Uttar Pradesh."

Dr. Sanaie said people need to take the virus seriously and behave maturely. Wearing a mask, maintaining social distance and avoiding large gatherings is the only solution, he stressed.

Also, the doctors observe that in the second wave of pandemic they are witnessing patients without comorbidities.

"Last year we had patients with multiple comorbidities and patients above 60-years of age were presenting with Covid 19 pneumonia but this year there is no such bar," Dr. Sanaie said.

As per a senior SMHS medico, the hospital gets around 30-40 patients of pneumonia every day and about 50-70 per cent of them come out to be Covid positive.

"However as per the symptomatology and radiological features, almost all qualify as Covid pneumonias," he said. "Many positive cases are unreported because people get positive on rapid antigen test (RAT) kits at home."

"If we remain careless, we are bound to be doomed," he added.

The administration on its part admits that the situation is challenging but maintains it's not out of control adding that they are working on a 5-pronged strategy to contain the spread of coronavirus in J&K.

Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education, Atal Dulloo in a press conference on Wednesday said that J&K has made ample preparations to meet the challenge.

Elaborating, Dulloo said that intense testing including that of travellers and other suspects is being done at a rapid pace followed by a containment process that includes contact tracing and several restrictions are in force.

He expressed satisfaction that unlike previous year, this year there is one more weapon in their arsenal: Covid vaccine.

"We have 13,400 active cases with a good recovery rate of 89.6% and mortality rate of just 1.38%," Dulloo said. "There are around 120 containment zones and effective mechanism of contact tracing in place. Some 1,64,000 contacts were traced this year with all the required restrictions applied to contain the spread of this disease."

However, the scenes at the hospitals are different, where doctors are witness to the "brutal face" of pandemic.

Dr. Khawar Khan, a Junior Resident Medicine posted at SMHS, mapped this crisis in his tweet: "COVID has returned hard. The scenes in the hospital are disheartening. A young couple lying side by side, both COVID positive. It was heart wrenching how the husband was checking the oxygen saturation of his wife when his

## 2020 RIOTS: Court Dismisses Plea Seeking Handcuffs For Umar Khalid And Khalid Saifi



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** A court here on Thursday dismissed the applications seeking to produce former JNU student Umar Khalid and activist Khalid Saifi, arrested in connection with the last years northeast Delhi riots, before it in handcuffs" and sought explanation from the DCPs concerned of Delhi police for moving such plea.

The court noted that the applications were filed by Incharge, Lock-Up, Karkardooma District Courts, reportedly after a decision was taken in the matter by so called senior police officers of Delhi Police to move such applications before the Court .

The applications, which came up for hearing before Additional Sessions Judge Vinod Yadav, sought to produce both the accused in handcuffs in both hands from back side , contending that they are high-risk prisoners .

During the hearing, Special Public Prosecutor Manoj Chaudhary was asked about the meaning of high-risk prisoner and that where the same has been defined; whether in the jail manual or Punjab Police Rules or the circular(s) issued by Delhi Police.

The SPP, however, submitted that he was not aware of the instant applications and, therefore, he could not take instructions in the matter.

The court noted that both the accused have already been granted bail in the case pending before it, and the other matter was pending before some other judge.

It is presumed that the bail order(s) of applicants are in the knowledge of senior police officer(s) of Delhi Police.

The instant applications

are completely bereft of the reason(s), prompting the senior police officer(s) to take a decision to move such application(s), the judge said.

He said that for want of material/reason(s) in respect of the applications in question, this court is at a loss to consider the grant of prayer(s) in these applications.

In this view of the matter, let report(s) be called from DCP (Special Cell), who is dealing with the investigation of case FIR No.59/2020, PS Crime Branch (pertaining to criminal conspiracy) and DCP, 3rd BN, DAP (Delhi Armed Police) to communicate the reasons for moving such application(s) before this Court.

The report be also called from Superintendent Jail concerned on these applications.? Now, renotify the matter for further consideration on May 6, the judge said.

While Saifi was granted bail in the case in November last year, Khalid was granted the relief earlier this month.

The present case was registered on the statement of Constable Sangram Singh, where he stated that on February 24, 2020 at about 2 PM, a large crowd gathered on the road and started pelting stones in which he and other police officials got injured as they were thrashed by the mob.

They set the vehicles in a parking area nearby on fire, including his motorcycle of the complainant was also burnt by the rioters, he said.

The accused, however, are in jail as they were arrested in another case related to the criminal conspiracy, lodged under stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and other sections.

own saturation was only 80% and he was gasping while doing it."

A doctor posted in SKIMS, Soura, told Kashmir Observer that the hospital is well-equipped to deal with the Covid but maintained that if the situation remains the same, they can't handle the crisis.

"Last couple of weeks, we have admitted around 20-30 patients per day and it is also the fact that there are a good number of patients below 40 with Covid symptoms," the doctor said.

He argued that one of the reasons for that might be the government's decision to throw parks and gardens open for sightseeing. "We lately witnessed a mad rush of tourists at Tulip garden, making many of us prone to the infection now," he added.

After recording over 2000 Covid cases in a day, the government's 50 percent business lockdown drew flak from traders in Kashmir.

But while more effective methods are being explored with the civil society's support to deal with the Covid crisis, Kashmir hospitals are only witnessing another phase of health emergency.

"So many are being detected positives each day," said Nusrat, an overburdened nurse posed in a Srinagar hospital. "If we don't act now and take necessary precautions, our hospitals will soon run out of space and hope."

### BSF Foils

around 10:15 pm Wednesday, a BSF official said.

He said the three went back after the BSF troops posted at the Paharipur border outpost fired gunshots to stop them.

A joint search operation was being conducted in the area by the BSF and the Punjab Police, a police official said.

### CBK Conducts

over JKPC scam, an official said. It was however not immediately known whether any recovery has been made at either of the places, even as the official maintaining that more raids are expected at other places as well. (GNS)

### Grenade, Bullets

grenade, 191 rounds of ammunition and 20 charger clips on Wednesday night, they said.

In another operation, a joint team of security forces launched a search operation in the border belt of Chak Mangu area on the inputs of suspected movement, officials said, adding that drones were also used in the operation. (PTI)

### 4 Gamblers Held

regarding gambling activities, a police spokesperson said Thursday. Besides cash, he said, playing cards were also seized from the gamblers during the raid.

"They have been shifted to Police Station where they remain in custody. Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Sumbal and investigation has been initiated," the police spokesperson said.



## Kolkata Knight Riders Skipper Eoin Morgan Unfazed By His Poor Form

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** His poor run of scores notwithstanding, Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Eoin Morgan remains unfazed and says it's a "matter of time" before he fires in the ongoing IPL.

After their 18-run loss against Chennai Super Kings in Mumbai on Wednesday, the World Cup-winning captain's sequence of scores this season read 2, 7, 29 and 7.

"It's everything's about the process. The way I'm going about things at the moment is extremely positive. I've been here a long time now and I've been practising well and it's a matter of time before something comes together," he said at the post-match press conference.

KKR have got a vaunted batting line-up, but it has faltered in three matches so far in the league, even though the team came close against CSK.

In the high-scoring game, CSK posted 220/3 in 20 overs and then managed to bowl out KKR for 202, after Morgan's team was reeling at 31 for five inside the powerplay.

"We have a very deep batting line-up, and it's one of our strengths and we are very experienced in that middle and lower middle-order, and today we saw that."

A fine rally, led by Andrew Russell, Pat Cummins and Dinesh Karthik, helped KKR go past 200 but not the stiff victory target of 221.

Morgan said he is proud of the strong comeback by his team.

"We have to be proud of getting so close, and actually putting ourselves in a winning position. Particularly, Pat Cummins towards the end played beautiful," Morgan said.

"It really did flip things right in our favour, but obviously, having made those five mistakes earlier did cost us."

For KKR, the change of venue did not change their fortunes as their bowlers leaked plenty of runs after Morgan opted to field.

Morgan had made two changes in his bowling attack, bringing in rookie pacer Kamalesh Nagarkoti in place of Harbhajan Singh, while Sunil Narine played his first game of the season replacing Shakib-Al-Hasan.

While Narine returned figures of 1/34 from his four overs, Nagarkoti conceded 25 runs from his two overs. But it was their star pacer Cummins who was the most expensive among the lot as the Aussie gave away 58 runs from his four overs, while Russell's two overs went for 27 runs with one wicket at the death.

But Morgan said the bowlers did a reasonable job.

"I think today, upon reflection after both sides have been batted, they did a reasonable job. When you look at the position that we were in from the powerplay onwards, and only falling 20 runs short."

"You don't have to be an optimist to think that we would have been in a good position if we had batted better at the top of the order," he signed off.

## Morgan Fined For Maintaining Slow Over-Rate



Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Kolkata Knight Riders skipper Eoin Morgan has been fined Rs 12 lakh for maintaining a slow over-rate during his team's IPL match against Chennai Super Kings in Mumbai on Wednesday.

Faf du Plessis' magnificent 95 not out and Deepak Chahar's impressive four-wicket haul powered CSK to an 18-run win over KKR on Wednesday night. In the high-scoring game, CSK posted 220/3 in 20 overs and then managed to bowl out KKR for 202.

"Kolkata Knight Riders captain Eoin Morgan has been fined after his team maintained a slow over rate during their VIVO Indian Premier League (IPL) 2021 match against Chennai Super Kings at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai on

April 21," the IPL said in a statement.

"As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Mr Morgan was fined Rs 12 lakh," it added.

As per the IPL guidelines, the captain of the erring team is docked Rs 12 lakh on the first instance of slow over-rate.

On the second instance during the season, the fine for the captain is doubled (24 lakh) while every other member of the playing XI is penalised with a 25 per cent deduction from the match fee or Rs 6 lakh -- whichever is lesser.

This was Morgan's first offence of the season.

The win lifted CSK to the top of the table with six points from four matches, while KKR slipped to sixth.

## Advisor Khan Reviews Progress On PMDP Sports Projects



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Farooq Khan on Thursday reviewed the progress made on the sports projects executed by the J&K Projects Construction Corporation (JKPCC) here. The Advisor assessed the status of each of the project executed by the Corporation and fixed timeline for their completion.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Sports Council, Nuzhat Gul, Executive Director, JKPCC, ND Khawaja, engineers and other officers of the council.

Advisor Khan asked about the possible date of completion of each of the project and facilities to be provided in each of them. He also asked about the kind of infrastructure raised at each location. The Advisor directed for bringing weekly progress reports

along with the latest photographs depicting the updated progress made on each of the project site.

Giving further directions the Advisor asked the indenting department to ensure that each of the facility raised by them have all the amenities available so that they could be useful under every circumstances. He asked them to make available the safe drinking water, washrooms, change rooms, parking facilities, approach roads and illumination of surroundings of each of the facility to make them fully functional and safe for players of both genders.

He asked them to make available the coaches of different games at these facilities so that players get benefited from them. He also asked them to create player-friendly facilities everywhere and draw a schedule of games to be played in

the ensuing sports season.

The Secretary Sports Council informed the Advisor that there were some 10 multi-purpose indoor sports halls under execution by the JKPCC, with two out of them at Rajouri and Reasi have already been completed and dedicated to public. She gave out that these are completed at an estimated cost of Rs 400 crores each. She said that the ones at Poonch, Pulwama, Kishtwar, Shopian, Doda, Pattan and Ramban would be completed by September this year with many to be dedicated to public in the months to come.

The ED JKPCC informed the chair that best of the practices and designs have been used in creating these sports utilities. He said that each of the projects would be completed with all the requisite facilities and dedicated to public at an earliest within the timelines fixed.

### IPL 2021, PBKS Vs MI, Preview

## MI Seek Consistency As PBKS Eye Return To Winning Ways

Press Trust of India

**CHENNAI:** Mumbai Indians would be aiming to address their batting woes to achieve consistency while Punjab Kings would be desperate to arrest their overall slide when the two sides clash in an IPL match here on Friday.

The Rohit Sharma-led Mumbai crashed to defeat against Delhi Capitals following an inept batting performance and will look for redemption. The skipper shone with the bat, but others could not get going and the misfiring middle-order would be a major concern for the side.

The MI bowlers have more often than not risen to the occasion and won matches for the team.

However, they couldn't do so against Delhi and would like the batters to put up bigger scores for them to do the job.

Rohit looked in good touch against Delhi. However, Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan, stars of the team's victorious 2020 campaign, have not been able to make match-winning contributions and that has hurt MI along with mid-order performances from Kieron Pollard and the Pandya brothers -- Hardik and Krunal.

It is still early days in this year's IPL but Mumbai Indians would like its players to find form and consistency and a match against an under-performing Punjab could well be the beginning.

Punjab have flattered to deceive



after a winning start. Being shot out for 120 by Sunrisers Hyderabad on Wednesday hinted at bigger problems for the KL Rahul-led team, which has more than one issue to resolve, especially its composition. The formidable batting unit hasn't hit the straps, save for Rahul and Mayank Agarwal and the bowling has been pedestrian.

"Universe Boss" Chris Gayle has not been able to boss over proceedings while his fellow West Indian Nicholas Pooran, expected to provide the big shots in the middle, has come a cropper so far.

Three straight losses would have definitely dented Punjab's morale and the team needs to recover quickly or else its play-off hopes

would slip fast.

Rahul has got two fifties in four games so far but has lacked support from others. His captaincy has not inspired a lot of confidence and muddled team selection has compounded his woes.

Deepak Hooda showed what he is capable of, but greater consistency would be needed from him if the team has to prosper.

They bet on Australian pace imports Jhye Richardson and Riley Meredith to up the ante but they have proved expensive and already lost their place in the XI.

Punjab may look to bring in the talented Rav Bishnoi in place of Murugan Ashwin and fit in Chris Jordan in the XI.

## CSK Coach Fleming Gives Update On MS Dhoni's Parents Health

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Chennai Super Kings coach Stephen Fleming said the franchise will "monitor" the condition of skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni's parents, who are being treated at a private hospital in Ranchi after testing positive for COVID-19.



At the post-match press conference after CSK's win over Kolkata Knight Riders on Wednesday night, Fleming said the situation is "under control".

"From the management point of view, we're well aware of his family situation and the support has been set up for MS and his family. The situation is under control for now but we will monitor that over the next few days," Fleming said.

The former India skipper's parents, mother Devika Devi and father Pan Singh, were admitted to the hospital after testing positive for the highly contagious virus on Wednesday. The New Zealander said he has spoken to the skipper about it and they have created a set-up for his family.

"It's a tough time for everybody, and the fact that it's affecting India in the way it is but also it'll reach into the IPL with friends and family, and hopefully, not into the bubbles. We've spent quite a bit of time talking about care of the friends and families in the wider group."

"We have that responsibility to make sure that he's got the support he needs and hope that his family recovers quickly," Fleming added.

## Stephen Fleming Credits Shift In Attitude To CSK's Turnaround



Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Chennai Super Kings coach Stephen Fleming has attributed the team's turnaround, after the flop show in last IPL, to a shift in attitude and addition of some key personnel.

Three-time champions CSK are occupying the top spot following three successive wins in the ongoing league, less than six months after failing to make the tournament's playoffs for the first time, in the UAE.

"Winning three out of four probably exceeded the expectations. We felt maybe three out of five or if we got a couple would be good," Fleming said at the post-match media interaction after beating Kolkata Knight Riders on Wednesday.

"We're very proud of the way the batting in particular is standing up that's two 190s and two 220s So, we're playing well in that department and that's by design which is good."

While Sam Curran has carried for-

ward his form from the last season, the real value addition has been the off-spin all-rounder Moeen Ali, who is giving them the flexibility with his hard-hitting approach at No. 3.

"I think we've added some players that made a difference already, but the attitude is probably the number one thing, so real mind shift."

"It's probably both of those things, just making sure that we have a lot of batting that you can play a high-risk game and that gives confidence to the players to play a certain way."

"We felt we were a little bit thin last year to play a high-risk game. So we had to really swivel around and change more attitude than anything in this year," Fleming said.

Backing the players has been CSK skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni's success mantra, and opener Ruturaj Gaikwad reposed the faith by returning to form with a 42-ball 64, which set it up for Faf du Plessis (95 not out from 60 balls) to finish the innings on a rousing note.

## F1 Champion Lewis Hamilton Prays For COVID-Hit India

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Seven-time Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton has expressed his concerns about the alarming COVID-19 situation in India.

The British racing driver has sent in his good wishes as the country battled a massive second wave of the coronavirus with daily cases going past three lakh.

"Praying for the beautiful of India this morning. I know this pandemic is hitting so many places around the world. Please stay safe out there," Hamilton wrote on his Instagram page.

India registered over 3.14 lakh new cases on Thursday morning, pushing the overall caseload to nearly 1.60 crore, according to the data provided by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. This is the highest single-day spike the country recorded ever since the pandemic began last year.

India also reported over 2100 fresh deaths due to the virus with maximum fatalities being reported from Maharashtra at 568, followed by Delhi at 249. So far, over 1.84 thousand COVID patients have succumbed to the infection across the country.

Places like national capital Delhi and Lucknow are dealing with acute shortage of oxygen cylinders and hospital beds, which has attracted global attention.

## Yamuna Sports Complex In Delhi A COVID Centre Now



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Yamuna Sports Complex started functioning as COVID centre on Wednesday amid spiralling coronavirus infections and huge shortage of beds in Delhi.

The centre has a total bed capacity of 880 beds, which includes 200 beds with oxygen supply. It will be monitored by Seemapuri Subdivisional Magistrate Shailendra Kumar Singh, according to a statement.

"The Yamuna Sports Complex at Delhi is now converted to Covid emergency ward and will be functioning from noon onwards as on 21/04/21. Patients with Covid emergency can be admitted here," the release from the centre said.

On April 14, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had announced his government's decision of attaching banquet halls, schools and sports complexes to hospitals to increase the number of beds.

Delhi reported a record 28,395 coronavirus cases and 277 deaths on Tuesday, with the positivity rate shooting up to 32.82 per cent -- meaning every third sample came out positive.

## 'Super League On Standby,' Says Founder Florentino Pérez

Agencies

**MADRID:** The Super League is far from dead and its clubs have not given up on the idea of the breakaway competition despite having to shelve the project just a few days after it was announced, Real Madrid president Florentino Pérez said on Thursday.

Pérez, who would have been the new league's founding chairman, said the clubs behind the Super League will continue working on a way to make the competition work, even if changes have to be made to its format.

He said the Super League is on "standby" and the group is open to discussing ideas with European football's governing body and other entities to help the game amid the coronavirus pandemic. Pérez said he was certain that a "very similar" competition would soon be created.

"We are going to keep working," Pérez told Spanish radio network SER in an interview after midnight local time. "We are looking for ways of getting this done. It would be a shame not to get it done."

The Super League was announced on Sunday but essentially folded after the English clubs involved in the project pulled out Tuesday amid escalating backlash from their supporters and warnings from the British government that legislation could be introduced to thwart them.

On Wednesday, Atlético Madrid and the three Italian clubs in the project -- Ju-

ventus, AC Milan and Inter Milan -- also opted out. That left Real Madrid and Barcelona as the only clubs still officially in the new league. Pérez said no one was really leaving, though.

"They haven't left," the Madrid president said. "We are all still together, thinking of ways of making this happen."

Pérez admitted that they should have explained the project better, and said he was "sad and disappointed" with the "avalanche of aggressive" and "orchestrated" criticism that surfaced everywhere.

"Each president was prepared to speak, but then the next day we got killed," Pérez said. "We weren't expecting it. It was like we had launched an atomic bomb. It looked like that they already knew about it and were waiting for us."

He said one of the English clubs was not really interested in the project from the start and that was "contagious" for the rest of the Premier League owners who were afraid of the criticism at home. The English clubs initially involved in the project were Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City, Manchester United and Tottenham.

While some Premier League clubs apologized to their fans while pulling back on Tuesday, the teams which dropped out on Wednesday admitted defeat but tried to show they still believe in the project.

"While Juventus remains convinced of the soundness of the project's sport, commercial and legal premises, it be-

lieves that at present there are limited chances that the project be completed in the form originally conceived," the Italian club said. "Juventus remains committed to pursuing the creation of long-term value for the Company and the entire football industry."

AC Milan said the "voices and the concerns of fans around the world have clearly been expressed," but the club "will continue to work hard to deliver a sustainable model" for football.

"We accepted the invitation to participate in the Super League project with the genuine intention to deliver the best possible European competition for football fans around the world and in the best interest of the club and our own fans," the Italian club said. "Change is not always easy, but evolution is necessary for progress, and the structures of European football have evolved and changed over the decades."

Inter Milan said it was committed to delivering the best football experience for fans because "innovation and inclusion have been part of our DNA since our foundation."

"Our commitment with all stakeholders to improve the football industry will never change," Inter said in a statement. "Inter believe that football, like any sector of activity, must have an interest in constantly improving its competitions in order to continue to excite fans of all ages all over the world, within a framework of financial sustainability."



## CPI(M) Leader Sitaram Yechury's Son, 34, Dies Of COVID-19



### Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury on Thursday said his elder son Ashish died of COVID-19 in the morning.

Ashish Yechury, who would have turned 35 on June 9, was recovering well at Gurgaon's Medanta Hospital, people close to the family added, describing his sudden death at 5.30 am after a two-week battle with the disease as a shock.

Ashish, who studied at the Asian College of Journalism, Chennai, worked in several publications, including the Times of India in Delhi, before moving to Pune.

Journalists who worked with him remembered him as a mild-mannered and warm professional who was knowledgeable and well read. The CPI(M) Politburo issued a statement announcing the death and offering its condolences to the family.

"We are deeply sorry to announce the passing away this morning (22 April) of Ashish Yechury, son of Sitaram Yechury and Indrani Mazumdar. He died of Covid related complications. He was 35 years old.

"The Polit Bureau conveys its deepest condolences to Sitaram and Indrani, his wife Swati, his sister Akhila and all other members of the bereaved family," the statement said.

Condolences for the family also poured in on social media as news broke of his death.

"Deeply saddened and pained to hear about the loss of Ashish Yechury. I offer my heartfelt condolences to Comrade @SitaramYechury, his family and friends at this difficult time," tweeted DMK leader MK Stalin.

Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said he was devastated by the news.

"There is no greater loss for a parent to endure. May you find the strength to bear the inexpressible grief of your loss. My heart goes out to you at this painful time."

TMC MP Derek O'Brien also offered his condolences.

## Over 1,700 Doses Of COVID-19 Vaccines Stolen From Haryana Hospital



### Agenceis

**CHANDIGARH:** Over 1,700 doses of COVID-19 vaccines were stolen from a government hospital in Haryana's Jind, a police official said today.

The incident took place at the civil hospital in Jind on Wednesday night. A total of 1,270 doses of Covishield and 440 of Covaxin were stolen from the hospital, SHO of Civil Lines police station Rajender Singh said.

"The accused did not touch any other vaccine, medicine, cash, etc. lying in the store," he said.

The matter came to light when a sanitation worker found the locks of the store and deep freezer broken on Thursday morning.

A health department official in Jind said there are still enough doses of COVID-19 vaccine available.

By this evening, 1,000 additional doses each of the two vaccines will be available at the civil hospital, he said, adding that 6,000 doses of Covishield would reach the hospital by the evening.

The SHO said a case was registered in connection with the incident and police were investigating the matter.

## 300 Passengers Skip Mandatory Covid Test, Flee Silchar Airport After Creating Ruckus



### Press Trust of India

**SILCHAR:** Over 300 passengers, who landed at the Silchar airport on Wednesday, created disorder and fled the facility to escape mandatory COVID-19 testing, officials said on Thursday, and asserted criminal action will be initiated against them.

Cachar district Additional Deputy Commissioner Sumit Sattawan said a total of 690 passengers arrived at the airport from various parts of the country aboard six aircraft. He said they were supposed to undergo swab tests at the airport and the nearby Tikol Model Hospital.

"Around 300 people created chaos at both places, mainly over payment of Rs 500 for the tests," he said.

The Assam government has made it mandatory for all air passengers arriving in the state to undergo free Rapid Antigen Test

followed by an RT-PCR test for Rs 500, even if the report of the RAT comes negative.

Asserting that the passengers had violated the rules, the officer said, "We have their database and we will track them. We will initiate criminal action under Section 188 of the IPC (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) and other relevant provisions."

Of the 690 passengers, 189 were tested and six were found infected with the virus. Many were exempted from testing as they were transit passengers on way to neighbouring states like Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura, Sattawan said.

The Assam government had on Wednesday night announced that all people coming from outside will have to undergo seven days of compulsory home quarantine, as the state's COVID-19 tally shot up to 2,29,138 with 1,150 fatalities. PTI

## India Sees 3.14 Lakh New Covid Cases, Highest-Ever One-Day Increase In World



### Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** The number of daily coronavirus cases in India hit a record high with over 3.14 lakh new infections being reported, pushing the total tally of COVID-19 cases to 1,59,30,965, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

A total of 3,14,835 fresh infections were registered in a span of 24 hours, while the death toll increased to 1,84,657 with a record 2,104 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Registering a steady increase for the 43rd in a row, the active cases have increased to 22,91,428

comprising 14.38 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has dropped to 84.46 per cent.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 1,34,54,880. The case fatality rate has further dropped to 1.16 per cent, the data stated.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19. India crossed the grim

milestone of 1.50 crore on April 19.

According to the ICMR, 27,27,05,103 samples have been tested up to April 21 with 16,51,711 samples being tested on Wednesday.

The 2,104 new fatalities include 568 from Maharashtra, 249 from Delhi, 193 from Chhattisgarh, 187 from Uttar Pradesh, 125 from Gujarat and 116 from Karnataka.

A total of 1,84,657 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 61,911 from Maharashtra, 13,762 from Karnataka, 13,258 from Tamil Nadu, 12,887 from Delhi, 10,710 from West Bengal, 10,346 from Uttar Pradesh, 8,114 from Punjab and 7,510 from Andhra Pradesh.

## Second Coronavirus Lineage Found In India With Immune Escape Mutation: Scientists

### Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** A new lineage of the SARS-CoV-2 virus linked with high infectivity and immune escape mutation has been identified in India, but there is no evidence yet that it is driving the Covid surge either in the country or in West Bengal where it was located first, say scientists.

The new lineage called B.1.618 is distinct from the B.1.617, also known as the 'double mutant' virus that contains two mutations, E484Q and L245R, and is believed to be behind the powerful second COVID-19 wave sweeping through India.

"There is no need for alarm. Standard public health measures are needed," said Anurag Agrawal, director of the CSIR-Institute of Genomic and Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB) in New Delhi. He described B.1.618 as a "lineage of interest" and said it is being investigated.

B.1.618 is a new lineage of SARS-CoV-2 predominantly found in India and characterised by a distinct set of genetic variants including E484K, a major immune escape variant. Vinod Scaria, a researcher at CSIR-IGIB, explained in a lengthy Twitter thread earlier this week.

E484K has been found in variants first identified in South Africa and Brazil, which scientists say is of particular concern as it helps the virus slip past the body's immune defenses. B.1.618 also carries the D614G mutation in the spike protein and has earlier been linked to increased infectivity.

The spike protein enables the virus to infect human cells.

The lineage was first isolated in India on October 25, 2020 and most recently on March 29, according to variant tracker 'outbreak.info' run by US-based Scripps Research.

"More research needed"

Sounding a note of caution while also trying to quell panic as India on Thurs-

day reported 3.14 lakh new infections, scientists here stressed on the need for more research and the dogged continuance of Covid appropriate behaviour.

"The new lineage is a combination of mutations that impart the properties of immune escape as well as more infectivity at individual mutation levels," virologist Upasana Ray, from Kolkata's CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, told PTI.

"This lineage is a combination of multiple mutations—deletions of amino acid tyrosine and histidine at positions 145 and 146 of the spike protein, mutation E484K that has been reported earlier to be contributing towards escape from immune response and D614G which was linked to increased infectivity," she explained.

However, the role of the deletion mutations is not well understood as of now, Ray said, adding that the collective role of all these mutations together is not well characterised.

The initial sequences in the B.1.618 lineage were found in West Bengal. However, members of this lineage are also found in other parts of the world but do not have the full complement of variants as found in India.

"The proportions of B.1.618 have been growing significantly in the recent months in the state of West Bengal, India. And along with B.1.617 forms a major lineage of SARS-CoV-2 in the state of West Bengal," Scaria said in the Twitter thread.

"There are many unknowns for this lineage at this moment including its capability to cause reinfections as well as vaccine breakthrough infections. Additional experimental data is also required to assess the efficacy of vaccines against this variant," he said.

At the moment, Scaria stressed, there is no conclusive evidence that the lineage is behind the epidemic in West Bengal. More focused epidemiological

investigations will address these questions, he said.

"Although many samples from West Bengal belongs to the lineage B.1.618, to connect this lineage with the rise in the cases of infections in West Bengal, more detailed sampling and investigation is required," Ray added.

West Bengal on Wednesday registered its highest single-day spike of 10,784 new COVID-19 cases, which took the tally in the state to 6,88,956, the health department said. The death toll also rose to 10,710 after 58 fresh fatalities were reported.

Samiran Panda, head of Epidemiology and Communicable Diseases at the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), said mutations are known to happen while viruses proliferate in number. Some of these mutants offer survival advantage to the virus while others don't.

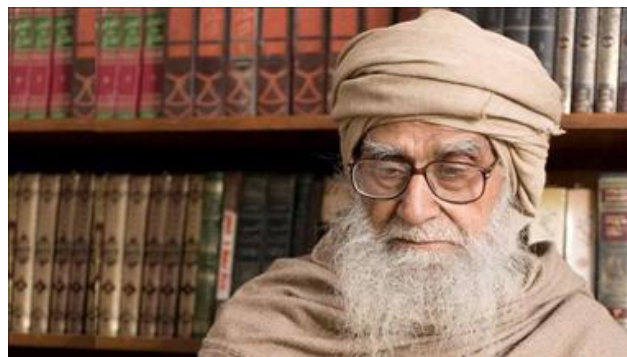
"What is important to understand from the public health perspective is that the new mutants, as well as the old circulating strains, get transmitted by the same route of transmission," Panda told PTI.

"Therefore, time tested proven prevention strategies should be strictly adhered to such as correct and consistent use of face mask, maintaining hand hygiene, maintaining physical distancing, and avoidance of mass gatherings should be adhered to," he added.

According to Panda, the transmission of these mutants will also be interrupted efficiently if these prevention measures are followed appropriately by 80 per cent or more of the people in the community.

Making a distinction between lineages, strains, and variants, Agrawal said, "Technically there is only one strain here—nCoV19 or SARS CoV-2. Lineage is in context of ancestry from the original. Variant is a broad way of saying the same thing."

## Maulana Wahiduddin Khan Dies Of COVID-19



### Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** Distinguished Islamic scholar and peace activist Maulana Wahiduddin Khan passed away in New Delhi after contracting a novel coronavirus, his family members announced. He was 96.

Maulana was recently admitted to a hospital in New Delhi after testing positive for COVID-19.

"The great Islamic scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan breathed his last, late this evening. Doctors failed to revive his sinking heart. Pray for his maghfirat [penitence] and high station in Paradise. Amin," Zafarul Islam, Khan's eldest son, tweeted on Wednesday.

The author of more than 200 books, Maulana has been honoured with several awards. This year, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India's second-highest civilian honour.

Born in Azamgarh, India, in 1925, Khan has been internationally recognised for his contributions to world peace.

In 2009, Georgetown University in Washington, DC's list of 500 Most Influential Muslims of 2009 named him "Islam's spiritual ambassador to the world".

In 2001, he established the

Centre for Peace and Spirituality to promote and reinforce a culture of peace. Khan went on a 15-day Shanti Yatra (peace march) through the western Maharashtra state in the wake of the demolition of the 16th-century Babri Mosque by Hindu hardliners in the state of Uttar Pradesh in 1992.

He also wrote a two-volume commentary on the Holy Quran.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he was "saddened" by the news of Khan's loss.

"He will be remembered for his insightful knowledge on matters of theology and spirituality. He was also passionate about community service and social empowerment. Condolences to his family and countless well-wishers. RIP," Modi wrote on Twitter.

President Ram Nath Kovind said he was "deeply grieved" by the demise of Khan.

"Maulana Wahiduddin made significant contributions to peace, harmony and reforms in the society. My deepest condolences to his family and well-wishers," he said.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed sadness over the death of Khan, and said he will be remembered for his insightful knowledge on matters of theology and spirituality.

## Reconsider Policy Of Not Vaccinating At Home: Bombay HC to Centre

### Agenceis

**MUMBAI:** The Bombay High Court on Thursday asked the Union government to reconsider its stand that door-to-door COVID-19 vaccination was not feasible, saying it must consider the plight of old people and the disabled.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice GS Kulkarni said the government cannot just "leave old people to die".

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had on Wednesday informed the court that door-to-door vaccination was not possible due to various reasons including the possibility of contamination and wastage of vaccine.

The Centre's reply came in response to a public interest litigation filed by lawyers Dhruvi Kapadia and Kunal Tiwari.

The PIL sought door-to-door vaccination programme for senior citizens above the age of 75, the specially abled persons and those who are bed-ridden or wheelchair-bound.

The high court said there are many elderly people and others who cannot move out of house due to illness.

"Don't close the chapter saying it is not possible. This ought not to be the policy. The Union government will have to give a relook to its policy and do something for the elderly people."

"The policy needs a relook by experts. You cannot leave old people to die," Chief Justice Datta said.

The judges also noted that in Indian culture, children and elderly people are given priority.

"Both the children and elderly people are not in a position to

function independently so we have to take care of them," Justice Kulkarni said, adding that vaccine is the only certain way of ending the pandemic.

The court also cited the example of Israel where the majority of population has been vaccinated, and Los Angeles in the United States where people are being vaccinated while sitting in their cars.

"They do not even have to go into the vaccine centre. We also need to advance ourselves," Justice Kulkarni said.

Additional Solicitor General Anil Singh argued that many senior citizens suffer from serious ailments and they must be kept under medical observation for half an hour after they get the jab.

This was not possible in a door-to-door drive, he said.

The court said some middle way must be found, as such people with co-morbidities need the vaccine all the more.

The HC also sought to know about the vaccine availability in Maharashtra. Advocate General Ashutosh Kumbhakoni said the present stock will last only three or four days, but it would be replenished soon.

The court said people should be intimidated whether the vaccine is available at a particular centre so that they do not travel in vain.

"Centralised information has to be available. Otherwise, it will be like the Mumbai floods where a person sitting in south Mumbai has no idea what the situation is in the suburbs and ends up travelling there and getting stuck in water for hours," Justice Kulkarni said.

The next hearing will be on May 6. PTI

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