

# KASHMIR OBSERVER

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P5 STATE

## OWING TO 'RITUALS AND TRENDS' OVER 50,000 GIRLS CROSS MARRIAGEABLE AGE IN KASHMIR: SURVEY

In a worrisome development, nearly 50,000 girls of Kashmir have crossed the age bar of getting married owing to unnecessary...

P6 THINK

## KASHMIR'S SIMA AUNTY

A friend recently told me about this Kashmiri matrimonial app eManzimoor that has been developed by a US-based Company Musalleen. I was told that the app is a digital version of Kashmiri manzimoor and supposedly takes into consideration the...



P3 CITY

## DC SGR TAKES STOCK OF COVID SOPs, RESTRICTIONS IN CITY MARKETS

The Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Mohammad Aijaz Asad Wednesday visited various markets of Srinagar City to inspect the implementation of Covid related...



**Quote!**  
A person is either your brother in faith, or your equal in humanity.  
—Imam Ali to Malik al-Ashtar

# 30 More Succumb To Covid-19, 3023 Test Positive



The spurt in coronavirus cases has prompted J&K govt to convert Srinagar's indoor stadium and other buildings into Covid-19 treatment center. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

## Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** The deadly coronavirus infection claimed 30 more lives in Jammu and Kashmir, highest ever fatalities in a single

day, even as 3023 fresh cases of Covid-19 were detected across the Union territory during the last 24 hours, prompting the administration to impose an 84-hour lockdown from

Thursday evening. According to the officials, 18 more people succumbed to coronavirus at various health-care facilities in Kashmir, while 12 deaths caused

## 84 Hour Lockdown In 11 Districts From Today

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** An 84-hour lockdown will be imposed in 11 districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday evening in a bid to tackle the surge in COVID-19 cases, a senior official said.

The union territory had on Tuesday recorded its highest single-day spike of 3,164 COVID-19 cases, which took the tally to 1,66,054, while 25 fatalities over the last 24 hours took the toll to 2,197.

The curfew will come into effect at 7 pm on Thursday and remain in force till 7 am on Monday, Secretary of the Disaster Management Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Department

Simrandeep Singh said on Wednesday.

"Eleven districts including Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Kulgam, Pulwama, Ganderbal, Jammu, Kathua, Reasi, Udhampur will be under 'corona curfew' from Thursday evening (7 pm) till Monday morning (7 am)", Singh said.

The detailed orders under the Disaster Management Act listing out prohibitions and permissible activities will be issued by the deputy commissioners, he said.

Here in Srinagar, Deputy Commissioner, Mohammad Aijaz Asad announced "complete lockdown" in this capital city from 7 pm Thursday, a day after he ordered imposi-

## Vaccine Registration For 18 Plus Begins

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** All those aged above 18 can register themselves on the CoWIN portal or using the Aarogya Setu app to get vaccinated against COVID-19 started on Wednesday, the Union Health Ministry said as the government gears up to launch the third phase of vaccination drive from 1 May.

"Registration for the newly eligible category for COVID-19 vaccination opens today at 4 pm on cwin.gov.in and Aarogya Setu app," the ministry tweeted.

After registration, taking an appointment to get a COVID-19 vaccine jab would be mandatory for those aged between 18 and 44 years as walk-ins will not be allowed initially, officials had said.

Those above 45 years can still avail the facility of on-site registration to get vaccinated, they said.

As India witnesses a surge in coronavirus

## J&K Expects Vaccines By May 20: Dulloo

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Jammu and Kashmir government has issued orders for the supply of COVID-19 vaccines for undertaking vaccination of people above 18 years and the administration is expected to get supplies by May 20, a senior official said on Wednesday.

Jammu and Kashmir will provide COVID-19 vaccine free of cost to people in the 18-45 age group, the office of Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had said on Saturday.

"We have placed orders for supply of vaccines to undertake vaccination free of cost to people in the 18-45 age group. We expect to get

## NEWS DIGEST

### Police Files Charges In Ganderbal Attack

**SRINAGAR:** Police on Wednesday filed a chargesheet against three alleged militant associates in connection with last year's militant attack on a BJP leader in which the militant and a policeman were killed. According to a police spokesperson, chargesheet was produced before the court after obtaining the

### Falling Tree Kills Govt Employee

**SRINAGAR:** A department of horticulture employee died on Wednesday after being hit by a falling tree in south Kashmir's Shopian district. Nazir Ahmad Wagay of Balpora village in the district was critically injured on Tuesday when a poplar tree fell on him, which was being

### Man Booked For Whipping Bird

**SRINAGAR:** Police in Balakote area of Poonch have filed a case against a man, seen in a viral video, whipping an Acridotheres tristis bird, popularly known as Maina in India. A Wildlife official said that after going through the video, it was established that the act warranted action. "We have watched the video-clip and

### Bear Injures Man In Sopore

**SRINAGAR:** A man was attacked and injured on Wednesday by a bear in a village in Sopore area of Baramulla district. 40-year-old Abdul Salam Dar was walking near a riverside area of his native village of Hilob Dangerpora in Sopore when a bear appeared there and attacked him, an official said. Dar, he said, raised

### Car Crash Kills Wife, Injures Husband

**SRINAGAR:** A woman was killed while her husband was injured on Wednesday in a road accident in Uri town of Baramulla district. According to reports, an Eco cab (JK-04E-5046) skidded off the road in village Nawa-runda Uri on Wednesday leaving a couple identified as Khursheed Ahmad Kohli and his wife Pakeeza Begum injured.

## Ladakh Tourism Players Oppose Investment By Outsiders

Press Trust Of India

**LEH:** The Ladakh Tourist Trade Alliance on Wednesday passed a resolution to oppose investment by outsiders in the tourism sector of the Union territory, and threatened imposition of restrictions on such investors.

The resolution, signed by 16 Leh-based groups, unanimously decided to work in solidarity to protect the tourism industry of Ladakh.

The resolution seeks preservation of Ladakh as a unique tourist destination and for protection of the avenues of entrepreneurship and livelihood of the local people, to safeguard the fragile ecosystem and oppose investment, in any form, in the tourism sector from outside the region, LITA chairman P T Kunzang told reporters here.

The Ladakh Tourist Trade Alliance

## KU Puts Off Exams, Shuts Hostels

The University of Kashmir on Wednesday announced to postpone all its offline examinations, including UG and PG examinations, till May 15 in view of the ongoing pandemic situation. The varsity also decided to close its hostels till May 15, 2021 in the interest of safety of the hostel boarders. The decisions were taken pursuant to a meeting of the varsity's advisory committee which was convened to deliberate upon the conduct of examinations and the recent directions/orders from the

## Waqf Wants Less Devotees In Shrines, Masjids

The Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board on Wednesday urged Imams to allow a minimum number of devotees to the board-managed Masjids and Shrines for prayers in view of the huge spike in coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mufti Muhammad Farid-ud-din urged people to pray at home saying that thousands of persons are tested covid-19 positive on a daily basis which has rung the alarm bells, an official spokesperson said. He said that the CEO also made a fervent appeal to the Imams of Masjids and Shrines affiliated with the Board

## Jama Masjid Closed For Congregational Prayers

The management of Jama Masjid on Wednesday announced suspension of congregational prayers at the historic mosque in the Old City in wake of rapid spike in coronavirus cases and the imposition of prohibitory orders by the district administration. "In view of the rapid spread of Covid 19, although all SOPs were being strictly adhered to during prayers, Anjuman has decided to suspend all congregational prayers at the mosque for the time being for the safety of namazis," a spokesperson said. Early Wednesday morning, he said,

## Hospitals Running Short Of Key Drugs, Doctors Say

Auqib Javeed

**SRINAGAR:** At a time when Kashmir is reporting a record number of Covid cases, the valley hospitals are running short of key drugs like Remdesivir and Tocilizumab injections.

Doctors say Remdesivir is primarily meant for moderately-ill covid patients, while Tocilizumab is given to severely-ill patients.

Major Kashmir hospitals including SMHS, SKIMS, CD Hospital, JMC and JLNMC are already decrying the dearth of the critical drugs.

"Everybody knows Remdesivir injection is out of stock in SMHS," Dr Nazir Chaudhary, Medical Superintendent SMHS, told Kashmir Observer. "The hospital



administration can't help it." Dr. Chaudhary added that they get the supplies from Government Medical College (GMC), which in-turn gets it from Medical Supply Corporation (MSC).

The shortage of the drugs has already escalated problems for patients and their attendants.

Mushtaq Ahmad, whose son has been admitted in SKIMS, Soura told Kashmir Observer that the doctors prescribed the Remdesivir injection to the patient.

"But it's neither available in the hospital, nor in market," Mushtaq said.

One injection of Remdesivir

...Additional Charge System Prevails In J&K Admin

## Top Babus, Officers Holding More Than One Post

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Adhocracy has become part and parcel of governance in Jammu & Kashmir as the list of top bureaucrats and officers holding more than one post are piling up.

Details reveal that more than 10 Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers in the Union Territory are holding additional charge of different departments and institutions due to shortage of manpower at the top level in administration.

The Centre's move to depute IAS and group "A" service officers to the newly carved-out Union Territory seems to have done little to do away with the additional charge system, which has been afflicting governance for decades in the UT.

According to details, Shaleen Kabra, Principal Secretary Home, is also discharging responsibilities

as Principal Secretary, Revenue department and Financial Commissioner, Revenue.

Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department, is also holding additional assignment of Principal Resident Commissioner, J&K, New Delhi.

Naveen Choudhary, Principal Secretary, Animal & Sheep Husbandry department, is also holding charge of administrative secretary of Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare department and Horticulture department.

Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary, Power Development Department, is holding additional charge of administrative secretary, Information Department.

Manoj Dwivedi, Commissioner Secretary, General Administration Department, is also holding

## MeT Forecast Light Afternoon Showers In Kashmir

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Weatherman has forecast very light rain or thundershowers in Kashmir and Pirpanjal range towards afternoon in next few days, officials said on Wednesday.

"While main dry weather is expected, there is possibility of isolated very light rain/thundershowers in Kashmir and Pirpanjal range towards late afternoon in the next few days," a meteorological department official said.

He said Srinagar recorded a low of 10.2 degree Celsius against

9.0 degree Celsius on the previous night. The temperature was 0.9 degree Celsius above normal for this time of the season in the summer capital of J&K, he said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 7.7 degree Celsius against previous night's 6.6 degree Celsius which was below normal by 0.1 degree Celsius, the official said.

Mercury settled at 4.9 degree Celsius against 4.0 degree Celsius on the previous night in Pahalgam. The temperature was above normal by 0.5 degree Celsius during this month of the season in

## HC Quashes Allotments Of JMC Quarters To Former Officials, NGOs

Agencies

**JAMMU:** The J&K High Court has quashed allotment of nine quarters by Jammu Municipal Corporation spanning from the year 1993 till 2015 and simultaneously at posh Gandhi Nagar area in the winter capital of J&K.

A division bench of Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal and Justice Rajnesh Oswal quashed the allotments, made mostly in favour of the Corporation's officials, observing that allotments made are illegal and contrary to principle of equality.

"The allotments as well as

consequential rent deeds/ rent agreements made in favour of the respondent Nos. 5 to 13 are quashed," the court said and directed the allottees to vacate the premises in their respective occupation within a period of six months.

So far as other Municipal shops, flats and garages are concerned, the court directed the authorities to examine the individual case and proceed in accordance with the law laid down by the Supreme Court in numerous decisions and take appropriate actions within a period of six months, extendable by another

## Ex- Home Dept Official Charged In DOB Fudging Case

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** The Crime Branch of Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday filed a charge sheet against a former special secretary (legal) in the home department for forging his own date of birth for undue benefits.

A charge sheet has also been filed against Mohammad Salim Qasmi, a resident of Deoband in Uttar Pradesh, for his role in the conspiracy but the proceedings against him would be abated since he has died, a spokesperson of the Crime Branch Jammu

said. He said the charge sheet against the retrospectively retired special secretary Ghulam Mohiuddin Ganai was filed in the special anti-corruption court in a record time of 48 days of the registration of a case for judicial determination.

Ganai has been charged for misusing his official position, whereby he took unauthorised custody of his service book and forged his date of birth therein to get undue benefits as a public servant,

the spokesperson said.

"The case owes its origin to a written communication made with the Crime Branch, Jammu, by the J-K government along with allied documents, including a written complaint lodged by Ghulam Mohd Bhat of Hanjura village of Chadoora, alleging that Ganai who was till March 5, 2021 posted as special secretary (legal) to the home department J-K government, has used his official position to grab money and enjoy power as a senior legal officer," the spokesperson said. He said it was also alleged that the accused has "forged and manipulated" his own date of birth in official records.





# Facebook now has to ask permission to track your iPhone. Here's how to stop it

The Washington Post

If you have not already seen it, you will see a surprising message pop up on your iPhone from Facebook in the next few weeks: Do you give it permission to track you?

To make your iPhone more private, tap "Ask App not to Track."

Do not tap "Allow," unless you love creepy online ads.

To prevent this same pop-up from appearing for lots of different apps - and to limit some of the other digital tracking in your life - you also should change two settings right now. I have instructions below.

What is going on? With a software update that arrived this week called iOS 14.5 and iPadOS 14.5, Apple is finally forcing apps to come clean about a kind of surveillance they've been conducting on us for the past decade. Behind the scenes, apps can probe your phone for personal information that helps them target you with ads or even sell data about you to others. Now marketers and data brokers can't access a valuable way to identify your phone unless you explicitly say it's OK.

Some apps, such as The Sims, Venmo and Shake Shack have been seeking permission

to track for a few weeks now. Facebook and its sister app Instagram began asking permission on Monday and the company says it will roll out the pop up - and a screen arguing why you should allow it to track - over the next few weeks.

Facebook and other apps that make money by collecting our data and showing us hyper-targeted ads are not happy about having to ask permission. Mark Zuckerberg and friends have deluded themselves into thinking people enjoy feeling as though Facebook is eavesdropping on their conversations. (It does not really need to because it is already spying on our apps and websites.)

I think Apple should have gone even further, making "Don't track me" the default for everyone. But even if the new pop-ups are more work and more confusing than they ought to be, this is still a win for our privacy.

## What tracking really means

Apps gobble up all sorts of information about you, all the time - as I have written, even while you sleep. Now the software that runs your iPhone and iPad is putting up some roadblocks to collecting one particularly valuable piece of data: a way to identify your device.

Picture it: You are walking down the

street, and at every business you enter you leave a little sticky note saying you have been there. Someone who spotted enough sticky notes could connect the dots about who you are. Flower shop, jewelry store and tux rental? Someone is about to get married.

The app equivalent of that sticky note is a code hidden in your iPhone called the Identifier for Advertisers, or IDFA. Although this ID does not contain your name, it does look the same to every app. Many apps report your ID back to companies including Facebook and Google, allowing the advertising firms to connect the dots about what you do on your phone.

With iOS 14.5, an app simply cannot access your phone's IDFA unless you tell the operating system it is OK. And if you ask not to be tracked, apps also are not supposed to pass other kinds of personal information to marketing companies and data brokers. That includes your email address, location and other sneaky ways to identify your phone. Apple says it's going to police that policy through its App Store review process. We will have to see how well Apple does this. The company has begun requiring app makers to fill out what essentially are privacy nutrition labels to explain how they gather your data - but in my tests these are not necessarily always

useful or even accurate.

Facebook says by tapping "Ask App not to Track," you are hurting small businesses and free apps that depend on its targeted advertising. In addition to targeting your interests, tracking also helps advertisers learn whether their ads work.

I have listened to Facebook's argument, and I am not buying it. Nobody but you should know what you do on your phone. Aside from being invasive, this data can be used to manipulate us as consumers, citizens and voters.

Small businesses managed to thrive and reach customers before this kind of invasive tracking. Facebook already has more than enough information about us to show us relevant ads based on what we intentionally post, where we check in, and who our friends are. It should never have had the right to spy on what we do outside of Facebook, too.

The Washington Post is updating its apps for iOS 14.5 so that it no longer collects or uses the IDFA, says company spokeswoman Shani George.

Facebook is right about one point: The decision to fight app tracking now is pretty self-serving on the part of Apple. The iPhone maker has a financial interest to push apps to make money from subscriptions rather than

advertising, because it gets to take a percentage cut of any in-app purchases. But at least Apple is finally responding to a privacy problem its own design of the iPhone helped create.

## How to stop tracking

You'll have to take action to be protected. When an app prompts you, tap the button labeled "Ask App not to Track."

Unfortunately, the muscle memory in our fingers has been trained to tap "Allow" on app prompts. When app data company AppsFlyer recently studied how people responded to the privacy pop-up on 300 kinds of apps that launched it early, 41% of the time people tapped "allow" to permit the tracking.

If you messed up and accidentally gave an app permission to track, you can make a new choice one app at a time under Settings, then Privacy, then Tracking.

If you have more than one Apple device, such as an iPad, you'll have to say no on each device.

If an app is not asking you for permission to track, that means either the app has gotten out of the tracking business, or the app's maker has not posted an update yet. Until the app updates and asks for permission, iOS 14.5 will not allow it to access your phone's ad-tracking identifier, the IDFA.

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER ANANTNAG

No.101/6741/MVD/ANG

Date:-28/04/2021



### NOTICE

Whereas joint application has been received by this office from Mr.Adil Gulzar S/O Gulzar Ahmad Dar R/O Urahnall Anantnag(Party No.1st) as Transferor, (Seller) Owner of the Vehicle Bearing Regd. No.JK03K-7776(Commercial/ Non-Commercial) covering under R/P No.N/A. and Mr.Afaq Ahmad Lone S/O Showkat Ahmad Lone R/O Laripora Pahalgam(Party No.2nd) as Transferee (Purchaser) requesting for transfer of R/C & R/P of the above noted Vehicle from party No 1st and 2nd. And Cancellation of hire purchase agreement with N/A. Before the case is disposed off on its merit, anybody have any objection regarding the proposed transfer Army file his objection within (7) days from the publication of this notice to the office of the undersigned. No any representation / objection shall be entertained after stipulated period.

mja Assistant Regional Transport Officer Anantnag

## OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER KASHMIR

### NOTICE

Where as an application for transfer of ownership has been received from Imtiyaz Ahamd S/O Mohammad Latif R/O Chakra Uri (Transferor) of Car bearing registration No. DL8CAA-4167 chasis No: MALAM51BLCM1225 Engine No: G4HGCM 454905 Model 2012 in favour of Imtiyaz Ahmad S/O Mohammad Latif (Transferee).

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

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

NOJK-RTOK 332 Sd/-  
Dated: 28/04/2021 Regional Transport Office,  
FKO Kashmir

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

### NOTICE

Whereas an application has been recieved from one. Shri : Abdul Gani Wani S/o: Gh Mohammad Wani R/o: Sonapah Beerwah Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04D-2203 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S Mahindra & Mahindra Finance B/U Sgr .

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 office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.499  
Dated 27-04-2021  
MCB

Assistant Regional Transport officer  
Budgam Kashmir



## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform that I, Irfan Nazir R/O Dana Mazar Safakadal Have lost my wallet which contains some cash and my driving license bearing no.jko120130086408 issued on 22/11/2013, Valid TILL 19/3/2028. If anyone has found it, kindly call on this number 9906591600 at the earliest. Otherwise I have to apply for the duplicate Driving License . In this regard anybody having any objection may contact concerned RTO within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that of publication of this notice.

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (JSD) PHE. DIVISION, PULWAMA

email : xenpheapulwama@gmail.com

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT S. No. 06/PHEP of 2020-21(SHORT)

For & on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir (UT) (Short) e-tenders in single cover system are invited on Item Rate Basis from Registered PWD Contractors whose registration cards are valid in terms of standing rules & are active for the following works :-

S. No	Name of work	Estimated Cost (in lacs)	Cost of TD (in )	Time for completion	Class of Contract	Programme
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Revamping of 02 No Slow Sand Filtration Plants for WSS Bonpora Litter & WSS Armullah Gadbug .	4.24	200	30 days	DEE	District Sector
2	Revamping of Rapid Sand Filtration Plant for WSS Gadhanjipora	1.47	200	20 days	DEE	District Sector
3	Revamping of Rapid Sand Filtration Plant for WSS Planpora Naina	1.05	200	20 days	DEE	District Sector
4	Revamping of 0.08 MGD Rapid Sand Filtration Plant for WSS Reshipora Dogripora	1.90	200	20 days	DEE	District Sector

The NIT consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, bill of quantities (BOQ), terms and conditions of contract can be seen/downloaded from the departmental web site (jktenders.gov.in) as per the dates shown below:-

S. No.	Description	Date DD	MM	YYYY	Time
1	Publishing date of NIT	26	04	2021	1600 Hrs
2	Download start date	26	04	2021	1600 Hrs
3	Bid submission start date	26	04	2021	1600 Hrs
4	Bid submission end date	05	05	2021	1600 Hrs
5	Bid opening date	06	05	2021	1600 Hrs

Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "download bid submission".

To participate in bidding process bidders, must get digital signature certificate (DSC) as per information technology-2000 bidders can get digital certificate from approved option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website (jktenders.gov.in) to acquaint vendors.

The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital signature.

Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document (as mentioned in above table Column (4) in shape of e-Challan or Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Pulwama (Tender inviting authority) under MH 0215 PHE (Name of work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) and Bid Security Declaration: Bidder to sign "Bid Security Declaration" (on Affidavit duly attested) (As per Appendix-I)

Bidders must ensure to upload their bids in SINGLE COVER containing documents as under:

- Scanned copies of Treasury Challan/Receipt and Bid Security Declaration
- Scanned copy of Valid Registration Card.
- Scanned copy of Valid GST Registration.
- Rates submitted by the bidders in the BOQ.

NO: PHEP/ 464-73  
Dated:- 25-04-2021

DIPK-897/21

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
(JSD)PHE. Div, Pulwama.

## J&K Handicrafts (S&E) Corporation Limited

Residency Road, Emporium Building, Srinagar  
Udyog Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, Jammu.

website: jkhsec.com

e-mail:jkhckgae@hotmail.com, md-jkhckgaesgr@gov.in  
Srinagar Office Phone No:0194-2479825,2486927 Fax No:2452376  
Jammu Office Phone No.0191-2477694 Fax-2475705.

No: JKHC/ACCTTS/2020-21/ 98

Dated: 26-04-2021

### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Jammu and Kashmir Handicrafts (S&E) Corporation, Emporium Building, Residency Road, Srinagar invites sealed offers from experienced Chartered Accountants/Tax consultants for all tax related job which include:

- Income Tax Audit.
- GST Audit.
- GST returns (Monthly)
- Filing of TDS Returns
- All other tax

The assignment shall be for the financial years 2021-22 & 2022-23 in the first instance. However, it can be extended with the mutual consent of both parties for an agreeable period. The quotations should reach the office of Manager Accounts by or before 05.05.2021

The EOI is also available on Corporation website www.jkhsec.com

DIPK-NB-465/21

Sd/-  
Manager Accounts

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B CONSTRUCTION DIVISION NO.II, SGR.

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT No.12/CDII/1150-60of 2021-22

DATED:26.04.2021

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

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees )	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	7	6
1.	Providing / fixing of collapsible door and other works in Library Block at Cluster University Amar Singh College Srinagar.	2.71	200/-	10 Days	Higher Education	"DEE"

Position of AAA: Accorded  
Position of funds Available

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) as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	28.04.2021 from 10.00 AM
3	Bid submission Start Date	28.04.2021 from 10.00 AM.
4	Bid Submission End Date	03.05.2021 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	04.05.2021 at 11.00 AM in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar

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

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

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

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

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

7. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

71. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [www.jktenders.gov](http://www.jktenders.gov). In to acquaint bid submission process.

72. 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.

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

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

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

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

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

9. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar (The date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of start of bid and Bid Submission End date) pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No.2nd, Srinagar must be uploaded with the documents of the bid. The original Treasury Challan (cost of tender document), and other relevant bid documents shall be obtained from the lowest bidder before the fixation of contract.

10. Bidders are advised not to make any change in BOQ (Bill of Quantities) contents. In no case they should attempt to create similar BOQ manually.

11. Bidders should note that if the documents uploaded/submitted on the basis of which the contract has been awarded are found fake/not genuine at any time, the contract shall be cancelled and the contractor/bidder shall be blacklisted for participation in this division for a period of five years besides the performance security deposited for the said work shall be forfeited.

12. Price escalation and Taxes:- The %age quoted by the bidder shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes upto completion of the work. Deduction on account of taxes shall be made from the bills of the contractor on gross amount of the bill as per the rates prevailing at the time of recovery.

13. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

14. In case of CRP and any other specified project, the relevant guidelines / standard bidding document shall be followed.

a. Extension of time shall be also admissible in the event of temporary suspension of work.

8. The tender / bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.

19. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form) and detailed NIT issued vide this office No. 07/CDII/2011-12/389-414 dated 07.04.2011.

No. 1150-60

Dated:26.04.2021

DIPK-942/21

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
R&B Construction Division IInd  
Srinagar







Muslim Scholars Condemn Israel Attacks On Jerusalem's Palestinians



Agencies

The International Union for Muslim Scholars praised the resolve and resilience shown by Jerusalem's Palestinians in the face of Israeli practices that seek to "displace" them. The remarks came in a statement signed by the union's Secretary General, Sheikh Ali Al-Qaradaghi, and they coincide with the escalation of confrontations between Israeli authorities and Palestinian civilians in occupied Jerusalem. The statement added that Palestinians in Jerusalem are subjected to Israeli measures that

aim to displace them from their lands, adding that the world has failed to stop Israeli oppression of Palestinians for years. The union reiterated its stance on the Palestine Question, which it considered the number one cause for Muslims, and condemned Israel's continued attacks on Muslim worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque, describing such attacks as "systematic terrorism that aims to Judaize Jerusalem and end the Palestinian presence in it." The union called on the Muslim and free world to stand united against the Israeli occupation's plots and its violations of international agreements.

UN Demands Combatants Protect Civilian Infrastructure From Attack

Agencies

The United Nations Security Council has demanded that all combatants protect schools, hospitals, power grids, water supplies and other infrastructure, unanimously adopting a resolution that focused for the first time on the destruction of critical civilian services in conflicts from Syria and Afghanistan to South Sudan and Ukraine. The resolution strongly condemns "indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks" that deprive civilians of essential needs and violate international humanitarian law. It demands all parties in armed conflicts comply with these laws and stressed the need to ensure accountability for violations. The Vietnam-sponsored resolution was adopted unanimously at a high-level virtual meeting of the Security Council chaired by Vietnamese Foreign Minister Bui Thanh Son, whose country holds the council presidency this month. It was co-sponsored by some 65 countries, including the 14 other countries on the UN's most powerful body.



"Unfortunately, history keeps repeating itself," and the Security Council has more often focused on protecting people "with little attention paid to securing the means for their survival", Son said. UN humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock lamented the last 20 years have seen "the emergence of transnational terrorist groups who totally reject the laws of war" and use their "nihilistic ideologies to justify unspeakable violence against civilians". When governments and other armed groups see this they "regard it as an invitation to do the same", he said. "At the same time big military powers are reorienting their military planning, training and spending to deter and defeat enemy states," he added. Lowcock singled out the effect of these trends on essential needs for food, water and medical care during conflicts. As examples, he cited an attack on a rice farm on the outskirts of Maiduguri in Nigeria last year that killed more than 110 farmers, widely reported pillaging of food and livestock in South Sudan between 2013 and 2020, and reports of systematic destruction of farms and infrastructure taking place now in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region. Lowcock also cited the armed group ISIL's (ISIS) cutoff of the water supply to Aleppo governorate in Syria in January 2016



Masks are still necessary for vaccinated people if they are at concerts, large sporting events.

Vaccinated People Don't Need Mask Outside Except In Crowd: US Health Body

Agencies

WASHINGTON: Americans vaccinated against the coronavirus no longer need to wear masks outdoors, except at crowded events, US government health authorities said Tuesday. Under the newly released guidance from the Centers for Disease Control, fully vaccinated people can eat, walk or attend small gatherings outside without a mask.

"If you are fully vaccinated, you can start doing many things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic," the government body said in a statement. Masks are still considered necessary for vaccinated people if they are at concerts, parades or large sporting events, even when outdoors, the CDC said. Indoor activities remain under a masks recommendation. This includes movie theaters and even "uncrowded" indoor

shopping centers and museums, the CDC said. The CDC stressed that its newly relaxed guidance only applies to people who have had their full vaccine doses and are two weeks past the final shot. More than half of all US adults have now received at least one of two vaccine doses. The surging rate of people seeking out vaccines has begun to taper, but new Covid-19 cases are also falling.

■ **IF YOU ARE FULLY VACCINATED, YOU CAN START DOING** many things that you had stopped doing because of the pandemic," the government body said in a statement.

One Dose Of Covid Vaccine Cuts Household Spread By Up To 50%: UK Study



Agencies

LONDON: One dose of the Pfizer or AstraZeneca vaccines reduces the chances of someone infected with coronavirus from spreading it to other household members by up to 50 percent, according to a English study published Wednesday. The Public Health England (PHE) research found that those who became infected three weeks after receiving their first jab were between 38 and 49 percent less likely to pass the virus on to their household contacts than those

who were unvaccinated. "This is terrific news -- we already know vaccines save lives and this study is the most comprehensive real-world data showing they also cut transmission of this deadly virus," said British Health Secretary Matt Hancock. "It further reinforces that vaccines are the best way out of this pandemic as they protect you and they may prevent you from unknowingly infecting someone in your household," he added. The study drew data from over 57,000 contacts in 24,000

households in which there was a lab-confirmed case that had received a vaccination, compared with nearly one million contacts of unvaccinated cases. Previous studies have already shown that being vaccinated reduces the risk of a person developing symptomatic infection in the first place by up to 65 percent, four weeks after one dose. Households are deemed as "high-risk" settings for transmission, and "similar results could be expected in other settings with similar transmission risks, such as shared accommodations and prisons," said the PHE study. "Not only do vaccines reduce the severity of illness and prevent hundreds of deaths every day, we now see they also have an additional impact on reducing the chance of passing COVID-19 on to others," said Mary Ramsay, Head of Immunisation at PHE. Previous PHE studies have estimate that Britain's successful vaccine rollout had prevented 10,400 deaths in the over-60s by the end of March.

■ **THIS IS TERRIFIC NEWS -- WE ALREADY KNOW VACCINES** save lives and this study is the most comprehensive real-world data showing they also cut transmission of this deadly virus," said British Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

Saudi Arabia Seeking 'Good Relations' With Iran: MBS



Agencies

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman says Riyadh is seeking to have "good relations" with Iran, adding, however, that the rapprochement is hindered by some differences. Bin Salman said in an interview broadcast on state TV on Tuesday that the kingdom was not interested in perpetual hostility with Iran but any thawing of relations would be conditional. "Iran is a neighboring state, we are seeking to have good relations with Iran, we have interests in Iran," The Saudi crown prince said. "We are working with our partners in the region to overcome our differences with Iran especially with its support for militias and the development of its nuclear program." Tehran has on many occasions announced its readiness to hold talks with its neighbors directly. It has already put forward an initiative called the Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE) to promote security in the Persian Gulf and facilitate such neighborly negotiations.

Iran has repeatedly underlined that Tehran welcomes negotiations with Saudi Arabia once it realized "genuine change of approach" by Riyadh and the abandonment of the kingdom's aggressive foreign policy toward the Islamic Republic. Regional powerhouse Iran's steady growth and burgeoning regional influence has hardly sat well with the Saudi kingdom over the past years. Riyadh cut its diplomatic ties with Tehran in early 2016 after its execution of senior Saudi Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr prompted angry protests in front of Saudi diplomatic missions in Iran. Moreover, Bin Salman's designation in 2017 as the next in line to assume Saudi kingship was followed by an exponential increase in Riyadh's animosity towards Tehran. Under Bin Salman, the kingdom along with the Israeli regime put pressure on the administration of former US President Donald Trump to withdraw from a historic nuclear deal with Iran, which Washington did in May 2018 and restored its draconian sanctions against Tehran.

Rouhani Says Leaked Tape Aimed To Sow Division In Iran



Agencies

TEHRAN, IRAN – Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has warned against division sown by the country's "enemies" after leaked audio revealed his top diplomat discussing internal power struggles, stirring up a political storm in the country. More than three hours of what is said to be a seven-hour tape of foreign minister Mohammad Javad Zarif speaking about a variety of issues was released earlier this week by Iran International, a London-based Farsi-language media network funded by Saudi Arabia. The president said during a televised cabinet meeting on Wednesday that the classified tape, part of an oral history project aimed at documenting his administration's work, was "stolen" by elements that the intelligence ministry has been tasked with finding. "It was leaked exactly when Vienna is at the height of its success," Rouhani said in reference to ongoing talks in the Austrian capital to restore the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran's 2015 nuclear

deal with world powers that the United States abandoned in 2018. "They want to create division inside the country. How can we succeed? How can we lift the sanctions? With unity and integrity." A JCPOA Joint Commission meeting was held between Iran, China, Russia, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom on Tuesday, where representatives agreed to accelerate efforts aimed at lifting US sanctions and curbing Iran's nuclear programme in compliance with the deal. In the audiotape, among other things the diplomat talks about how at times diplomacy had to be "sacrificed" for what he refers to as "the field" – military operations and politics driven by the powerful Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), and specifically its outward-looking Quds Force that was led by Qassem Soleimani until his assassination by the US in January 2020. Zarif also explained how Russia was against the JCPOA as it did not benefit from Iran normalising ties with the West, and how Russian President Vladimir Putin convinced Soleimani to increase Iranian ground presence in the civil war in Syria and flights to the country. The foreign minister's comment that he first heard from his then-counterpart John Kerry that Israel had conducted 200 air attacks against Iranian interests in Syria created a political storm in the US, with many Republicans calling for Kerry's resignation for divulging sensitive information.

NEWS MAKERS

Covid Risk Rises 50% If Passengers Board Planes Back To Front: Study

Agencies

Boarding passengers seated at the back of the aircraft first -- a Covid-era change by Delta Air Lines Inc. and others to cut the risk of infection -- actually increases the chance of catching the virus by 50%, a scientific study showed. So-called back-to-front boarding is also twice as risky as letting passengers on at random, even though it does reduce exposure between seated passengers and those walking down the plane, according to the study published Wednesday in the Royal Society Open Science journal. The higher risk comes from closer contact between passengers in the same



rows clustering in the aisle as they stow their luggage. Delta adopted back-to-front boarding to "minimize contact with other customers," according to its website, though the U.S. airline only boards 10 passengers at a time. The change was among several across the

industry -- including blocking out middle seats --- to persuade passengers it is safe to get back on a plane. Scientists from institutions including the University of West Florida and Florida State University simulated 16,000 possible passenger movements for the study. "The new policies do not improve on the old ones in any situation," they said. Delta's media office didn't reply to an email seeking comment. The risk of virus exposure could be reduced by stopping people using overhead storage bins, and by boarding passengers in window seats before those in aisle seats, according to the study.

Man Tries To Smuggle 35 Birds Past US Customs For Singing Contests

Agencies

NEW YORK, UNITED STATES: Customs officials at New York's JFK Airport discovered 35 live finches attached to a man's jacket and ankles as he attempted to smuggle them into the country for singing competitions, federal prosecutors said Tuesday. A search revealed the man was wearing dozens of small cylindrical containers with mesh-covered openings, allowing the birds inside to breathe, according to photos published online. Approximately a dozen of the containers, which were made from hair curlers, were



attached to the inside of his jacket, while the rest were wrapped around his ankles. When questioned, the man said that he was offered \$3,000 to transport the birds, receiving \$500 before he leaving the capital of Guyana, Georgetown. He was to receive the remaining balance upon delivery in the United States. Finches are prized for their joyful and melodious song, with singing competitions regularly held in parts of the New York boroughs of Queens

and Brooklyn, which include betting. A winning finch can be worth more than \$10,000, according to a special agent for the US Fish and Wildlife Service in the document released by prosecutors Tuesday. Finches from Guyana are in particularly high demand due to their superior singing abilities. The man was released on \$25,000 bond, according to documents. Worldwide, officials seized 20,762 wild animals in 2017, according to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), citing the last available figure.



## Maulana Rahmatullah Urges Masjid Committees To Follow SOPs Religiously

Observer News Service

**BANDIPORA:** Renowned Islamic scholar and rector of Dara-ul-Uloom Rahimiya Bandipora, Maulana Muhammad Rehamtullah Qasmi in a video message Wednesday appealed people to take preventive measures to combat the spread of Covid-19.

Qasmi said, "People must adhere to the usage of masks, sanitisers and maintain social distancing at the highest level whenever required and must follow all the guidelines laid by the medical health experts to contain

the COVID-19 and that's the way to get rid from this deadly virus."

He said those who go to pray to Masjids should maintain the SOPs religiously, wear masks, use sanitisers and maintain social distancing.

He asked the masjid committee's to make proper arrangements of masks, sanitisers, and treat it part of their job as that of managing power facilities, water and furnishing for the Masjid's.

Qasmi said people should also go for the vaccination and prayed to Almighty to cure those who have been affected by the deadly virus.

## Over 400 Vacancies Of SDD Referred To Recruitment Agencies: Dr Samoon

**JAMMU:** Around 419 vacancies of different cadres both gazetted and non-gazetted of Skill Development Department (SDD) have been referred to recruiting agencies in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir for further streamlining the working of the department.

Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD), Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon, informed here today while chairing a meeting of senior officers of SDD held to review progress on recruitment process besides taking stock of finalization of draft of Skill Development Service Rules.

The meeting was attended by Director, Skill Development Department, Sajjad Hussain Ganie; Secretary JKSSB, Sachin Jmalwal; Additional Secretary SDD; Deputy Secretary ARI; Deputy Secretary GAD; Deputy Secretary, Finance Department; representatives of Law Department and other concerned officers of various department.

Principal Secretary stressed on

early finalization of all the rules and regulations concerning the department so that the vacancies are filled up on fast track basis.

Various officers gave feedback and suggestions as well regarding fast tracking of recruitment process being carried out by the recruiting agencies.

Later, a team of ITI Employees United Front Jammu led by its State President, Nazir Ahmed Molavi met the Principal Secretary and submitted their memorandum of demands which inter alia included implementation of recommendation of Director General Trainings and change in nomenclature of posts of vocational instructor, posting of newly promoted officers, enhancement of salary of academic, contractual and consolidated employees besides holding of meetings of DPCs on regular basis.

Dr Samoon gave patient hearing to the union leaders and assured them that all their genuine issues would be taken up for redressal on priority basis.

## Owing To 'Rituals And Trends' Over 50,000 Girls Cross Marriageable Age In Kashmir: Survey



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In a worrisome development, nearly 50,000 girls of Kashmir have crossed the age bar of getting married owing to unnecessary trends and rituals.

Among the total girls who have crossed the marriageable age, more than 10,000 belong to district Srinagar.

A survey conducted by a non-profit organization Tehreek e Fala-UI-Muslimeen revealed that nearly 50,000 girls in Kashmir valley have crossed the age limit of getting married because of the unnecessary fashion and trend.

Co-founder of Tehreek e Fala-UI-Muslimeen, Abdul Rashid Naik said that in 2016 the NGO tried to reach out for a particular group of un-

married girls who were not able to get married because of the financial constraints but in ground they found some strange reasons for their late marriages.

"In our scheme we had projected that we will search for a group of 100 unmarried girls but during the survey we found thousands of girls that were either belonging from the underprivileged families or were destitute and have fall the prey of the new social evils pertaining to the marriage," Naik said.

He said, "In our survey, we found that most of the girls that were not getting married even after attaining the maximum age limit were belonging from the South Kashmir."

In the survey the NGO found that "the main reason

for the late marriages especially in the Downtown area of Srinagar is lack of financial sources and on the contrary the families of grooms are demanding dowry."

He said that another important reason for the late marriages is the competition set by a group of people wherein the underprivileged families try to compete with their neighbours belonging from the well-to-do families in give-take formalities.

"Irony is that most of the grooms prefer to marry educated and employed girls," Naik said.

Meanwhile Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Yateem Trust Zahoor Ahmad Tak said that on an average the trust conducts 400 marriages of under privileged destitute and widows across Kashmir every year and almost every second girl has crossed the age of marriage.

"Ninety percent of the girls that seek financial help from us for their marriages are over aged and in most of the cases some have even crossed the maximum age limit of getting married," Tak said.

Tak said that in the trust, they try to provide assistance to each needy girl who seeks marriage financial assistance and in most of the cases who turn-up for help belongs from the families that are headed by widows or have no source of income—(KNO)

**“IN OUR SCHEME WE HAD PROJECTED THAT WE WILL search for a group of 100 unmarried girls but during the survey we found thousands of girls that were either belonging from the underprivileged families or were destitute and have fall the prey of the new social evils pertaining to the marriage,”**

## Police Arrest Nine Persons For Illegal Extraction In Budgam

Observer News Service

**BUDGAM:** Jammu and Kashmir Police in Budgam Wednesday claimed to have arrested 09 persons and seized 04 Tippers in Khanshab and Beerwah areas who were found indulging in illegal excavation and transportation of clay, sand and Bajri.

In a statement issued to CNS, police mentioned that in Khanshab, some persons were illegally dredging sand and Bajri from Nalla-Shaliganga, police party from police station Khanshab arrested 05 persons.

Meanwhile the arrested have been identified as Fayaz Ahmed Malik son of Mohammad Yousuf, Bashir Ahmed Bhat son of Mohammad Ismail Bhat, Bashir Ahmed Mir son of Ghulam Nabi Mir, Mohammad Altaf Bhat son of Fatah Mohammad Bhat and Mohammad

Ashraf Malik son of Khaliq Malik all residents of Dreygam Khanshab.

The statement added that similarly, in Beerwah during naka checking at Gondipora, police party of PS Beerwah seized 04 tippers with

Registration numbers JK04E- 9999, JK04C- 0099, JK04F- 0999 and JK04C -4697 loaded with illegally extracted clay and arrested 04 drivers identified as Abdul Majeed Dar, son of Mohammad Sultan Dar, Resident of Beerwah, Farooq Ahmad Dar, son of Ghulam Qadir Dar, Resident of Aariwah, Abdul Majeed Sheikh, son of Ghulam Qadir Sheikh, resident of Gondipora and Abdul Rashid Wani, son of Ghulam Mohammad Wani, resident of Beerwah.

Accordingly, case FIR numbers 61/2021 & 53/2021 registered in PS Khanshab and PS Beerwah respectively under relevant sections of law and investigation taken up. (CNS)

## OPD Services Shut At GMC Anantnag

Observer News Service

**ANANTNAG:** Amid a steep surge in Covid positive cases, the routine OPD services at Government Medical College Anantnag have been closed, hospital authorities said Wednesday.

Medical Superintendent at Government Medical College Anantnag Dr Muhammed Iqbal said to avoid unnecessary exposure to the patients, the routine OPD services have been closed.

He, however, said that emergency OPD services will continue to function.

He said that GMC being an important hospital of South Kashmir, the OPD services cannot be fully closed and that emergency OPD services for both Covid and non-Covid patients will continue to function.

He said that non-emergency patients can get consultations

on phone/WhatsApp as numbers of all doctors along with their specialties will be shared separately.

He added that patients can speak to doctors any day, any time from 10 am to 4 pm and get consultation at their home.

Dr Iqbal said that vaccination process will be intensified further as now all above 18 years of age are eligible for vaccination and if still there are healthcare workers, front line workers who are yet to get vaccine, they must come forward at an earliest to get the jab.

He further added that testing has been also ramped up and patients whether Covid or non Covid will be admitted after producing Covid tests.

He further persons who are coming for tests need not to visit hospital again as their reports will be send on their phone number.

## SKUAST-K Holds Three-Day Training On Intellectual Property Rights In Agriculture

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Kashmir organised a three-day online training programme on intellectual property rights in agriculture.

The training was organised by the university's Faculty of Agriculture, Wadura campus, under the World Bank-ICAR funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project (NAHEP) for the institutional development of SKUAST-K, to mark the World Intellectual Property Day 2021 from April 26-28.

The aim of the training titled, 'Importance of Intellectual Property in Agriculture' was to aware the students and the faculty about various aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, World Trade Organization (WTO) trade-related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, National Intellectual Property Rights policy, filing of patents, protection of plant varieties and Farmers Right Act. etc



The online workshop was inaugurated by Prof Azmat Alam Khan, Associate Director Research SKUAST-K. The event commenced with the lecture by organizing secretary Prof. Raihana Habib Kanth, Chief Scientist and Nodal officer, NISF. She briefed about the history and the importance of the IP day, various Intellectual Property Rights and discussed the case studies of patents of Basmati, Neem, Turmeric, Saffron. She also informed about the advantages of getting the GI tag to Kashmir saffron. Dr Khurshid A Bhat, Assistant professor FoA, Wadura gave a detailed presentation about the procedure

of filing patents.

On the second day of the workshop, Prof Zahoor Ahmed Dar talked about the relevance of the PPVFR, Act in today's agriculture and how the Act provides for the establishment of an effective system for the protection of plant varieties, the rights of farmers and plant breeders and the development of new varieties of plants. He further highlighted the necessity to recognize and protect the rights of the farmers in respect of their contribution to plant genetic resource conservation.

The third day of the workshop was addressed by Khalid Z Masoodi on "Dis-

coveries and Innovations at SKUAST-K: Turning student research into IPR". The chief guest, Prof. Nazir A Ganie, Director Planning & Monitoring, PI NAHEP SKUAST K in his valedictory address talked about the importance of Geographical Indication in context to the richness of resources in Jammu and Kashmir and conservation of biodiversity. He also emphasized the mapping of resources & niche crops to identify unique and important crop communities. Prof Ganie also stressed on development of the IPR policy for SKUAST-K and working towards developing a database of farmers' varieties to be registered with PPVFR, Authority.

The workshop was registered by more than 300 participants from different States/UT's of India. The participants included teaching and scientific fraternity across the country, research scholars, scientists and programme coordinators of various KVKS.

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUIVE ENGINEER PWD(R&B) DIVISION KUPWARA

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

NIT No. 03-Kupwara/ 767-74 of 2021-22 e-tendering DATED: - 26-04-2021

For & on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K Union Territory, e-tenders (in single cover system) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other state/Central Governments for the followings works:-

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rs )	Time of completion	M.H of Ac-count	Class of Contractor
1.	Up-gradation of Heri Zirhama by way of Providing and laying of 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	43.69	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
2	Up-gradation of Kupwara Town in Different links by way of Providing and laying of 50mm BM in Patches and 25mm Semidense full.	61.18	1600/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
3	Up-gradation of Degree College road at Bohipora Kupwara by way of Providing and laying of 50mm BM in Patches and 25mm Semidense full.	30.94	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
4	Up-gradation of Sulkote Halmathpora road by way of Providing and laying of 50mm BM in Patches and 25mm Semidense full.	30.60	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
5	Up-gradation of balance portion of Gangbugh Anderbugh Chandigam road by way of Providing and laying of 50mm BM in Patches and 25mm Semidense full.	30.98	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
6	Up-gradation of Goonipora Jugtiyal Darmohalla road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense ( Agg length 0.65km)	21.85	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
7	Up-gradation of Meelyal Farkin road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	39.35	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
8	Up-gradation of Kralpora Shaloor road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	34.89	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
9	Up-gradation of Inner links Kralpora by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	17.49	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
10	Up-gradation of Manzapther link by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	28.82	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
11	Up-gradation of Chowkibal Khanbal road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	21.91	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
12	Up-gradation of Zirhama Marhama road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	21.90	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
13	Up-gradation of Gulgam Mugdam Mohalla Upto Dobi Mohalla by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	17.62	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
14	Up-gradation of Halmathpora Kote Madian road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	15.86	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
15	Up-gradation of Batak Mohalla to Takijan Mohammad at Khan Mohalla Payeen Gulgam-D by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	43.74	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
16	Up-gradation of Putpora Gushi road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	16.64	800/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
17	Upgradation of Shiekhpura Shalgund and Tilwanpora inner links at Lalpora road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	38.63	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner
18	Upgradation of Gund Drugmulla road by way of Providing and laying of 75mm WMM, 50mm BM and 25mm Semidense	44.82	1100/-	07 days	C&T	AAY with HMPO/ Hot Mix Plant Owner

Position of AAA: Accorded

Position of funds Available

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) as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	26-04-2021
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 26-04-2021 to 03-05-2021 (4.00P.M)
3	Bid submission Start Date	26-04-2021 from (10.00A.M)
4	Bid Submission End Date	03-05-2021 upto (04.00P.M)
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	04-05-2021 at (11.00A.M) in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Kupwara

1. The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading softcopy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected.

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

GST R-3B latest returns for Previous Monthly irrespective of date of Tender should be uploaded.  
All Bidders has to submit Bid Security Declaration Form as per Format given in SBD) as per the circular of Finance Department ( Bid Security Declaration)  
Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape E-Challan ( Under Account Head 0059) (E-Challan) must be purchased after tender date and Boldly written Name of Work, Name of Contractor with contact No, NIT No. & Sr. No of NIT) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Kupwara (tender inviting authority)

In case the L-1 fails deposit the requisite document, the action against the L-1 as per PWD rules leading to blacklisting of contractor  
On Opening of financial bid the L1 has to produce the Original CDR/FDR pledge to the opening Authority before allotting the work along with Cost of tender document in the shape of E-Challan .

Upload Valid Registration CARD /Renewal, PAN Card , GST Certificate and latest GST clearance ending previous Month.  
It is mandatory for all bidders participating to submit all documents in terms of soft copies in e-tendering website and no documents in terms of Hard Copies shall be entertained. However, lowest bidder will be called for submission of CDR/FDR as well as E-Challan and CDR/FDR of the other participating tenderers/ bidders will be released only after surrender of E-Challan .

Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared 1<sup>st</sup> Lowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.

The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.  
The contractor may purchase required material of quality and specifications prescribed, to be certified by Engineer in-charge

DIPK-992/21

EXECUIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION KUPWARA

### NEWS MAKERS

## Striking Transporters Stage Protest In Jammu, Demand Hike In Passenger Fare

**JAMMU:** On strike against the Jammu and Kashmir administration's order capping the seating capacity in public transport at 50 per cent amid the COVID-19 pandemic, dozens of transporters staged a protest here on Wednesday, demanding a hike in passenger fare for the survival of the "economically-hit" industry.

Led by T S Wazir, chairman of the All J-K Transport Welfare Association, the protesters assembled on the main road outside the General Bus Stand in the city. They set ablaze a tyre and chanted slogans in support of their demand.

Private transporters went on an indefinite strike on April 21 to protest the administration's order capping the seating capacity at 50 per cent in passenger vehicles. They say it is not feasible for them to ply their vehicles at 50 per cent capacity as the fuel prices are skyrocketing and they have already suffered huge losses since the outbreak of

the pandemic.

"It is very unfortunate that the administration of a union territory is behaving like its an autocracy. On the third day of our strike, we held a meeting with the transport commissioner and submitted our proposal to the government but no decision has been taken as yet," Wazir told reporters.

He said they were forced to take to the streets because the administration is not paying heed to their demands.

"We suffered huge economic losses last year on account of the pandemic and the latest unilateral decision of the administration, without enhancing the passenger fare, is bound to hit the industry badly," he said.

Wazir appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to look into the issue on humanitarian grounds and "save the people associated with the industry from starvation".

## Six Budgam Localities Declared Micro-Containment Zones



Observer News Service

**BUDGAM:** Amid a surge in Covid cases, District Administration Budgam on Wednesday declared six localities of the district as Micro-Containment Zones.

The circular issued by the District Administration reads that 6 localities in Central Kashmir's Budgam have been designated as Covid-19 containment zones in order to curb the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

According to the circular these localities are Wadwan, Sholipora, Ompora, Kaisermulla, Watkalu, and C.C Pora.

Meanwhile district administration urged the general public to strictly follow all Covid-19 related SOPs.



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## KO VIEW

## Become pro-active

**O**n Tuesday alone, J&K recorded its highest single day spike of 3164 new Covid19 positive cases and 25 deaths. Kashmir Valley accounts for a majority of 2134 cases and 10 deaths in Kashmir and Jammu division 1030 cases and 15 deaths. In Kashmir, Srinagar district alone accounted for 1144 cases which is more than the cases in Jammu division.

This is a 700 percent increase in the number of cases over the last four weeks. 199 people have died in this period because of the infection. This is a scary situation by any measure. And if nothing is done on a war footing to reign it in, our healthcare structure is certain to collapse sooner than the later. Like in the rest of the country, we have hardly upgraded our healthcare infrastructure over the last year. And when Covid started abating by the end of the last year, we also grew complacent. Even in the midst of the resurgence of the contagion, the administration's response is not commensurate with the grimness of the challenge. In fact, as the cases were rising exponentially, the administration set up a task force to surveil 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.

That said, the administration needs to get its priorities right. It has to focus its attention on the stupendous challenge on hand. Any further rise in the cases could plunge Kashmir into a deeper chaos. That is, if it hasn't already. So, the government has to step up. It doesn't have many options. For example, a complete lockdown is now ruled out after the economic devastation it caused last year. Government has to adopt innovative measures to ensure that the rising curve of the cases is flattened and that the healthcare infrastructure is upgraded to deal with the fresh cases. This can be done if the administration involves civil society and NGOs in the effort. Under the circumstances, a deliberately promoted culture of self-restraint by people and the widespread observance of the SOPs will see us through.

## OTHER OPINION

## Preserving a friendship

**A**t a time of distress, friends matter. And it is disappointing when a friend does not instinctively reach out and help, and, instead, may even add to the distress. As India got hit by the second wave, this is what happened with the United States (US) — when it was seen as blocking the export of raw materials essential to ramp up vaccine production or sitting on unused vaccines or not offering medical resources India needed to fight the pandemic. This may have been due to a range of reasons — America's isolationist foreign policy impulse (which has got reinforced because of the politics of ultra-nationalism), or a ruthless and insensitive decision-making matrix blind to suffering elsewhere, or its slow internal decision-making process, or its own trauma of pandemic leading to hoarding all resources available to fight Covid-19, or India's mixed messaging, or all of the above. The US came across as unreliable, even when antagonistic countries offered support. This led to a ground-up backlash, and rightly-so, against Washington.

The good news is that the Joe Biden administration listened to feedback — communicated by its own diplomats, Indian interlocutors, the diaspora, prominent Indian and American think-tanks, sections in the Hill (where even some critics of the current government in Delhi worked to voice India's case), media reports, and social media. This was not just a support package at stake — the entire relationship and perceptions of the US in India were at stake. And in the last two days, there has been a high-level attention to the issue, culminating in President Biden's phone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday night. The US has committed to providing emergency assistance, "including oxygen-related supplies, vaccine materials, and therapeutics". It has also announced a plan to share its stock of 60 million AstraZeneca vaccines, of which India will be a beneficiary. The good thing is it did not make it sound like a favour but acknowledged the Indian assistance to the US in its time of need.

Hindustan Times

RAEES MOHAMMAD

**It is supposed to take care of the ground realities of Kashmiri matchmaking but no one expects a US-based software company to develop an app entirely based on "family" and "family name" (caste system). The app, in the guise of preserving Kashmiri culture, protecting the "privacy and integrity" of the Kashmiri community and reflecting the ground realities of matchmaking in Kashmir does a great disservice to the power of the internet and software in transcending caste barriers in making matches**

## Kashmir's Sima Aunty

The world of matrimony and match making is still deeply sexist, casteist and classist in Kashmir

**A** friend recently told me about this Kashmiri matrimonial app eManzimyoor that has been developed by a US-based Company Musalleen. I was told that the app is a digital version of Kashur manzimyoor and supposedly takes into consideration the local culture and traditions of Kashmir. Out of curiosity to know more about the app, I signed up on the app. First I was asked to make a profile and give some basic information about myself. It was followed by questions on the kind of match I was looking for. One of the mandatory options that was required to be filled while making my profile was that of my "Family name" (surname). After completing the signup process, I started looking for matches. Unfortunately, the feed only gave me other people's surnames. They were people without names and looked like Ms. Syed, Ms. Mir or Ms. Bhat. The surname was accompanied by brief information about them and the kind of partner they were looking for. On the basis of this little information and the surname, you have to decide to send a request to the other person so that you can get more information about them. Any further information, including the name of one person, is revealed to another person in steps after they have matched by sending and accepting the requests. This concept of "Family name" in-

troducted in the app seeks to erase the individuality of those who are being matched. It is based on the assumption that marriage is a familial obligation and it is not just the two individuals who marry but the larger community also has a role to play. The first thing after downloading the app is to register and verify your mobile number. It is followed by an option "This Account is for?" under which it gives 'son, brother, sister, daughter, myself and other' options. "Son" is the default option while "myself" is the second last option followed by the "other". Such options have been clearly crafted to provide for a family-friendly app. A look at the images that accompany the app on the Google Play Store further endorses the point that the app promotes the marriage of families over individuals. In one of the images titled "ask any questions you may have", there is a screenshot of two parents messaging each other. One parent right after saying that his daughter is a teacher asks, "Where is 'your family' from?" The parent on the other end replies, "My family is from ... area of Kashmir" The obsession of the makers of this app with family can be gauged by this screenshot also. Just two messages discussing the profession of their children and they right away come to their families. Please note that there is a clear emphasis on "my family" and "your family".

The app in question has been developed by a US-based company that has an offshore office in Kashmir. It is supposed to take care of the ground realities of Kashmiri matchmaking but no one expects a US-based software company to develop an app entirely based on "family" and "family name" (caste system). The app, in the guise of preserving Kashmiri culture, protecting the "privacy and integrity" of the Kashmiri community and reflecting the ground realities of matchmaking in Kashmir does a great disservice to the power of the internet and software in transcending caste barriers in making matches. While there is no gainsaying the fact that matchmaking in Kashmir does involve casteism to some extent but if eManzimyoor wants to be innovative, it will have to stop perpetuating casteism. Right now, given the American connection and all the features of the eManzimyoor app, it can be said that the app is the 'Sima Aunty' of Kashmir matchmaking.

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

*The author is a student of Social Sciences*

Iran-Saudi Arabia  
Rapprochement and US

ELIJAH J MAGNIER

International Monetary Fund. Neither Iraqi nor Saudi officials would have agreed to initiate a dialogue with Iran had the US contested the rapprochement. Former President Donald Trump asked Abdel Mahdi to act as a mediator between the US and Iran and was informed about the Iran-Saudi exchange of letters in 2019. However, in January 2020, the US administration assassinated Brigadier General Qassem Soleimani just when Abdel Mahdi had been expecting the Iranian officer in Baghdad to deliver Saudi and US messages.

In reaction, former Prime Minister Abdel Mahdi requested that the US withdraw and obtained Parliament approval

try becoming a battlefield for Iran and Saudi Arabia or Iran and the US and to benefit from good relationships with all countries involved. Notwithstanding the distance and the possible lack of strategy President Joe Biden seems to adopt towards this part of the world, it remains unclear if it is in the US's interest or not to see such an Iranian-Saudi entente.

Many Iraqis have accused Saudi Arabia of funding al-Qaeda in Iraq (which became ISIS later) since the US occupation of Iraq in 2003. The removal of a Sunni leader (Saddam Hussein) to be replaced by the majority Shia gave a real blow to the Sunni dominance in Iraq, weakening Saudi Arabia's position in

**The decision for the Iranians and Saudis to meet in Iraq was not a coincidence. Since former Prime Minister Haidar Abadi, Iraqi leaders including Adel Abdel Mahdi and current PM Mustafa al-Kadhimi have been trying to build a bridge between Iran and Saudi Arabia.**

for this step. Henceforth he was no longer the suitable candidate to create a bridge between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The decision for the Iraqis and Saudis to meet in Iraq was not a coincidence. Since former Prime Minister Haidar Abadi, Iraqi leaders including Adel Abdel Mahdi and current PM Mustafa al-Kadhimi have been trying to build a bridge between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran prevailing for the last two decades have seriously affected neighbouring countries. Therefore, it is to the advantage of the Middle East for the two leading players to find common ground or organise their differences. The sectarian tsunami wars in Iraq and Syria that hit the region led only to destruction without changing the Middle East map. The two countries together represent the majority of Shia and Sunni and have the key to stability for the region if left to sort out their differences without foreign intervention.

It is, therefore, in the interest of Iraqi officials to avoid seeing their coun-

try becoming a battlefield for Iran and Saudi Arabia or Iran and the US and to benefit from good relationships with all countries involved. Notwithstanding the distance and the possible lack of strategy President Joe Biden seems to adopt towards this part of the world, it remains unclear if it is in the US's interest or not to see such an Iranian-Saudi entente.

Many Iraqis have accused Saudi Arabia of funding al-Qaeda in Iraq (which became ISIS later) since the US occupation of Iraq in 2003. The removal of a Sunni leader (Saddam Hussein) to be replaced by the majority Shia gave a real blow to the Sunni dominance in Iraq, weakening Saudi Arabia's position in

Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia is still a strong player in the Middle East. The power of money and the Wahhabi ideology can still play important roles in fomenting another sectarian war in the Middle East. Moreover, Saudi Arabia is an oil-rich country and has the financial power to finance and support countries in financial distress like Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. Iran is not able to fund these countries where its "Axis of the Resistance" is implanted. Tehran can only support its allies to resist but can never replace states or finance governments to come out of their financial crises.

What about the interest of the US? It all depends on how the Biden administration perceives the Middle East and its stability. A stable Middle East means opening Middle Eastern countries to the world market, meaning the US would lose the exclusivity and monopoly over these countries, particularly Iraq and other Gulf countries. It also means that dozens of US military bases in west Asia would become irrelevant. Thus far, the US is not showing any intention to leave Syria or Iraq. The American narrative consists of avoiding abandoning a country to the Russians and the Iraqis. This theory does not consider two factors: First, how much will a US continuous presence disturb the Syrian and Iraqi relationship with Iran and Russia? Second, how long can the US keep their forces in a hostile environment where a part of the population rejects their presence and will fight back until the US forces leave?

The departure from Afghanistan is taking place after 20 years of war, during which all US Presidents who succeeded George W. Bush failed to achieve their objectives.

If Biden has reached or will reach during his four years in power the conclusion that these parts of the Middle East are no longer on his priority list, then the rapprochement between Iran and Saudi Arabia makes more sense than ever. After all, the US showed how with sanctions and without the need for troops on the ground, it could cripple the economy of any country without necessarily subduing it.

The beginning of the Iran-Saudi talks is significant. It is far from a honeymoon. Building bridges of trust is challenging, and the ensuing long journey will contain complications and mistrust. However, as sources present at the first meeting said: a journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.



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## Covid-19 is not a Conspiracy

**I** have witnessed a sea of misinformation about the COVID-19 virus, and such information is in the form of videos, lectures, articles etc. And such stories are becoming a huge problem in tackling the spread of infection, which directly impacts the lives of people by making the situation on the ground worse. Therefore, please understand that the coronavirus is not fake, it is a deadly virus that infects and often kills. It was reported in December 2019 in a city known as Wuhan, China. And yes, the source of

the virus is still debated, and a popular hypothesis has associated its origin to a seafood market in Wuhan, China. But there is absolutely no confusion about the existence of the COVID-19 virus. It is a real virus. Scientists have taken pictures of it if you want to see one!

A virus is an infectious agent that is dead outside a host cell. And when it enters an organism (e.g. humans) it hijacks the cell's machinery by first breaking through the cell wall to penetrate the cell and then it actively replicates. Now the

host cell follows the orders from the virus and replicates until it totally destroys organs, and ultimately an organism. So, a typical virus takes full advantage of your weakness, which is usually in our immune system and allows it to break through the otherwise very protective cell membrane. And that is the reason why sick and elder people are more prone to such diseases. So, this tells us that to overcome a virus attack we ought to have a strong immune system, and for that a healthy, and nutritious life is important. If you are not tak-

ing care of your diet and health you must work on it now.

Therefore, it is my sincere request to please follow the proper guidelines regarding the COVID-19 and remains isolated from the virus. We ought to get vaccinated now, all of us. So, please go and vaccinate yourself. It will bring only harm if we wait or delay it.

Dr Afroz Shah  
afroz.shah@gmail.com



# COVID-19 FAQs

*The following is a transcript of Kashmir Observer's Facebook live interview with Dr Khawar Achakzai, Registrar General Medicine, SMHS Hospital*



## UNDERSTANDING THE SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19

**What is so different about the second wave? Is it more virulent? Is it more severe?**

More young people are getting affected by the second wave. Apart from the symptoms that were associated with the first wave like pneumonia, breathlessness etc., there are some new symptoms. There are lots of people who start with gastrointestinal symptoms like diarrhoea, vomiting and abdominal pain. A good number of patients coming are young which is completely different from the last year.

**Would you say that the mutant strain that has been found in Kashmir and in parts of India as well is responsible for the rise in Covid positive cases this time?**

A mutation is a phenomenon with the virus. Viruses keep mutating. Ascribing the second wave entirely to mutants would not be wise. That would be exonerating people and other things which have just added up to what we have right now in the form of a catastrophe that we are looking at. Mutants could be responsible but then ultimately reducing everything to mutants would not be right. People have been very careless and they have not been following SOPs very well.

**In a recent study, we found that Coronavirus may be airborne? What are the implications of those findings? Do we have to have a relook at the SOPs at all?**

There have been studies and research conducted by various research bodies and journals that have concluded that a good portion of the Covid transmission could be airborne. Previously it was believed that Covid transmits only through droplets.

It is important to differentiate between droplet transmission and airborne transmission.

Droplet transmission is an infection that spreads through exposure to virus-containing droplets like saliva and other particles that are exhaled by an infectious person. Transmission is most likely to occur when someone is close to the infectious person distance because the droplets fall after travelling a certain distance. So there is a certain distance up to which the virus could travel.

Airborne transmission is an infection that spreads through exposure to those virus-containing droplets composed of smaller droplets and particles that can remain suspended in the air over long distances. The new research has found that Coronavirus associates with particles of lesser mass. So the range of transmission and the movement of the virus has increased, that is, the virus travels more distance than in the droplet transmission.

SOPs do not change but they have to be followed more strictly.

- Previously we would say that wear a mask only when you have people around but now you have to wear a mask at all times even when there are no people around and preferably you have to double mask yourself.
- The rooms have to be properly ventilated.
- Avoid going to congested areas whether that is mosques, wedding or funeral gatherings. Stop flocking the markets unnecessarily and if there is a dire urgency, you have to make sure that you wear a mask at all times. Rather than one, wear two masks.
- Wash hands with soap and sanitize hands regularly.

All of these protocols and guidelines have to be followed meticulously and religiously now. There is absolutely no scope for a pitfall or a caveat anywhere.

**How to double mask?**



As far as Covi-19 transmission is concerned, N-95 masks always remain a standard. But we know they have not been prescribed for the general population because of the limited number of masks. The preferred mask for the general population is the surgical mask. The virus cannot go through the surgical mask.

First, fit the surgical mask tightly against the sides of the face so that there is no gap between the face and the mask while the mask completely covers your nose and mouth. If you have a cloth mask, preferably multi-layer, fit that snugly over the surgical mask. The surgical mask prevents the virus from moving beyond it while the cloth mask acts as a mechanical barrier for the droplets and the particles that carry the virus.

## TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

Here's what you need to know

**If someone tests positive for Covid-19, what are the things that they need to monitor, who are they supposed to contact?**

First of all, if someone tests positive for Covid-19 infection, whether through Rapid Antigen Testing (RAT) or RT-PCR, the first wise and sane step would be to inform the authorities because they need to compile the data regarding how many people test positive. There should be proper documentation of people who have tested positive. After that get a consultation. But if you are feeling good, get an oximeter and a thermometer. Check your oxygen saturation. If you are asymptomatic or have mild symptoms, an online or an on



phone consultation should be enough. In case of comorbidities like diabetes, hypertension, asthma, tuberculosis and other diseases, go to the hospital and carry out the investigations that your doctor asks for.

If you are in home isolation, check your oxygen saturation every 6 hours and check the temperature every day and keep the record of the same. Look for the change in breathing pattern and respiratory rate. If from the assessment of your temperature and saturation, you feel that you are not well, put a call to your physician and visit the nearby hospital. Make sure you do not visit hospital unnecessarily because we have limited resources and we should not overburden them.

**While one is monitoring oneself if they have tested positive for Covid-19 what are the things that would require immediate and urgent medical attention or even hospitalization?**

- In case the oxygen saturation drops less than 92%.
- In case the patient develops a severe fever. In case this fever is despite taking all the measures and the medicines that were prescribed by the doctor.
- In case there is a problem with breathing.
- In case there are gastric complaints like diarrhoea.
- In case the attendants of a patient notice a change in talking pattern.
- In the case of diabetic patients who have been diagnosed with Covid, if you see that their blood sugars are suddenly running out of control or their baseline conditions are running out of control.

In all these conditions it is better to re-see medical advice.

**What is the normal oxygen saturation and what oxygen saturation requires immediate medical attention?**

Anything more than 92% is a normal saturation. Anything between 90-92% would mean the person inform the call doctor through a phone call. Anything less than 90% would mean that the patient has to be rushed to the hospital.

**With the new strain, we have also observed that RT-PCR tests are coming negative, in that case, what is one supposed to do?**

If anybody develops any signs and symptoms that are typical of the disease irrespective of the fact if they tested positive or negative on RT-PCR, they have to be isolated, treated and managed like a Covid patient.

## COVID-19 VACCINES AND VACCINATION

**How effective are vaccines?**

Covaxin and Covishield vaccines are mainly being used in South Asia. In Kashmir, the Covishield vaccine is being used. It has been developed by AstraZeneca. In India, it is being manufactured by the Serum Institute of India (SII) using the same formula.



Covishield vaccine introduces the spike protein of the coronavirus in the body of a person using a weakened virus. It triggers a response from the immune system of the person that secretes antibodies against the coronavirus. The immune system then responds by secreting antibodies against the coronavirus at other times also, therefore, protecting against the intact coronavirus.

The vaccine has substantially protected people against hospitalization, against severe infections and deaths.

**When you take the first shot, there is 30-40% protection against severe infection. It takes 3-4 weeks for the same. After the second jab, there is 70-90% protection against severe infections and again it takes four weeks.**

However, this does not mean that a person who has been vaccinated will not contract the virus. They might but the severity of the infection and their chances of dying will be less. They might contract the virus but their chances of spreading the virus to other people also decrease.

There are only two things in the hands of the common people by which they can protect themselves, their family and their community against Covid-19, and those are vaccines and masks.

**Who can get vaccinated?**

Guidelines around the world have made all people above 18 years of age eligible for vaccines.

Some age groups for which vaccines become more important are those above the age of 60 and those above 45 years with comorbidities and other conditions.

In the first phase, only doctors and high-risk cases were eligible.

For the second phase, guidelines were relaxed.

In the third phase that starts from 1st May 2021, all above 18 years of age have been advised to take the vaccine.

**Who cannot get vaccinated? Are there any people who would have to consult a doctor before getting vaccinated?**

People with diabetes, hypertension and any other chronic disease should get vaccinated on a priority basis.

People who would have to consult a doctor before getting vaccinated:

1. People who are less than 18 years of age.
2. These vaccines have not been tested in pregnancy and lactating mothers, they should first consult their physician or gynaecologist.
3. People who are allergic to any medicines.
4. People who have active Covid infection. They should wait at least 4-8 weeks after their symptoms of Covid subside.
5. People who have received plasma for Covid. They should also wait.
6. Patients with less platelet count should first consult their doctor.

**What is the time gap between the first and the second jab of Covishield?**

The gap has been extended from 4-6 weeks previously to 6-8 weeks. It has been seen that when the gap is from 6-8 weeks, it gives protection of 90-100% against severe infections.

**Is it compulsory to get the second dose of the vaccine?**

The first dose only gives 30-40% against the severe infection. These doses are complimentary. If you want the vaccine to realise the full potential and get maximum protection, the second dose is compulsory.

**Some people are also very apprehensive of taking the vaccine because of the news of very rare instances of side effects like blood clots. Could you please address that?**

All the medications come with side effects. As far as the blood clots are concerned, AstraZeneca's vaccine has been received by millions of people and there are just some hundreds of people who reported blood clotting. People who reported blood clotting were predisposed to clotting and they already had conditions present in their bodies that made them more susceptible to clotting. The incidents of clots in the AstraZeneca vaccine are 4 per one million, which is a minuscule number. Now compare it with the people who contract the Covid virus, what are the odds of getting a clot? The odds of getting a clot in a patient who has contracted the Covid virus is 3 to7 per 100. The comparisons have to be made between the risk of getting a clot that is 4 per million or the risk of getting a clot that is 3 to7 per hundred.

**Now after May 1, even people above the age of 18 can get the vaccine but with that, a lot of people are apprehensive of getting the vaccine. Are vaccines safe for people under 45 or under 30?**

Of course. Research bodies advice for vaccination after conducting studies. They make suggestions based on data. Please read about the benefits of vaccination yourself and do not pay heed to rumours.

This is the right time to take the vaccine because right now we are moving towards the peak and we are anticipating that this peak might be somewhere around the end of May. So you still have the chance that you take a vaccine and you have enough or at least partial immunity against the virus until the peak comes.

**A lot of people have been saying the vaccine will cause infertility and that the vaccine will affect the menstrual cycle of women. Would you like to shed a light on that?**

I think these are just rumours. I have my female patients who have been vaccinated. I have my colleagues, young female doctors as young as 25-26 years old who have been vaccinated. I have females in my own family. I have my close relatives. I have my sister and I have my mother. All of them have been vaccinated. I say that all of these things are hearsay; all of these things are rumours which are unnecessarily being blown out of proportion. You should not believe in these things and you should go for it.

**A lot of people, especially youngsters think that they can buy time and wait for better vaccines? Are there any better vaccines and should we wait for them?**

We are in a pandemic. It does not give time for better vaccines or to build new hospitals. Whatever we have in our hands right now is better.

*Details expressed in the article are verified but are for awareness purposes only. They are not a substitute for medical advice.*



# More belly weight increases heart disease risk even if BMI doesn't indicate obesity: Study

## Agencies

People with abdominal obesity and excess fat around the body's midsection and organs have an increased risk of heart disease even if their body mass index (BMI) measurement is within a healthy weight range, according to a new Scientific Statement.

The statement was issued by the American Heart Association published today in the Association's flagship journal, *Circulation*.

"This scientific statement provides the most recent research and information on the relationship between obesity and obesity treatment in coronary heart disease, heart failure and arrhythmias," said Tiffany M. Powell-Wiley, M.D., M.P.H., FAHA, chair of the writing committee and a Stadman Tenure-Track Investigator and chief of the Social Determinants of Obesity and Cardiovascular Risk Laboratory in the Division of Intramural Research at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

"The timing of this information is important because the obesity epidemic contributes significantly to the global burden of cardiovascular disease and numerous chronic health conditions that also impact heart disease," added Powell-Wiley.

A greater understanding of obesity and its impact on cardiovascular health highlights abdominal obesity, sometimes referred to as visceral adipose tissue, or VAT, as a cardiovascular disease risk marker. VAT



is commonly determined by waist circumference, the ratio of waist circumference to height (taking body size into account) or waist-to-hip ratio, which has been shown to predict cardiovascular death independent of BMI.

Experts recommend both abdominal measurement and BMI be assessed during regular health care visits because a high waist circumference or low waist-to-hip ratio, even in healthy weight individuals, could mean an increased risk of heart disease. Abdominal obesity is also linked to fat accumulation around the liver that often leads to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, which adds to cardiovascular disease risk.

"Studies that have examined the relationship between abdominal fat and cardiovascular outcomes confirm that visceral fat is a clear health hazard," said Powell-Wiley.

The risk-inducing power of abdominal obesity is so strong that in people who are overweight or have obesity based on BMI, low levels of fat tissue around their midsection and organs could still indicate lower cardiovascular

disease risks. This concept, referred to as "metabolically healthy obesity," seems to differ depending on race/ethnicity and sex.

Worldwide, around 3 billion people are overweight (BMI = 25 to 29.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) or have obesity obese (BMI ≥ 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>). Obesity is a complex disease related to many factors, including biological, psychological, environmental and societal aspects, all of which may contribute to a person's risk for obesity.

Obesity is associated with a greater risk of coronary artery disease and death due to cardiovascular disease and contributes to many cardiovascular risk factors and other health conditions, including dyslipidemia (high cholesterol), type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and sleep disorders.

For this statement, experts evaluated research on managing and treating obesity, particularly abdominal obesity. The writing group reports that reducing calories can reduce abdominal fat, and the most beneficial physical activity to reduce abdominal obesity is aerobic exercise.

Their analysis found that meeting the current recommendations of 150 min/week of physical activity may be sufficient to reduce abdominal fat, with no additional loss from longer activity times. Exercise or a combination of dietary change and physical activity has been shown in some instances to reduce abdominal obesity even without weight loss.

Lifestyle changes and subsequent weight loss improve blood sugar, blood pressure, triglyceride and cholesterol levels - a cluster of factors referred to as metabolic syndrome - and reduce inflammation, improve blood vessel function and treat non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. However, studies of lifestyle change programs have not shown a reduction in coronary artery disease events (such as heart attack or chest pain).

In contrast, bariatric surgery for weight loss treatment is associated with a reduction in coronary artery disease risk compared to non-surgical weight loss. This difference may be attributed to the larger amount of weight loss and the resultant changes in metabolism that are typical after bariatric surgery.

"Additional work is needed to identify effective interventions for patients with obesity that improve cardiovascular disease outcomes and reduce cardiovascular disease mortality, as is seen with bariatric surgery," said Powell-Wiley.

The statement also addresses the "obesity paradox," which is sometimes observed in research, particularly in populations that have overweight or have Class I obesity (BMI = 30 to 34.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>).

## 'Women with iodine deficiency might have kids with neurological disorder'

### Agencies

An increasing number of young women are at higher risk of having children born with impaired neurological conditions due to poor iodine intake, according to a study led by researchers at the University of South Australia.

The findings were published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

Dietary changes, including a growing trend towards the avoidance of bread and iodised salt, as well as a reduced intake of animal products containing iodine, can contribute to low iodine levels.

A small pilot study undertaken by the University of South Australia (UniSA) comparing iodine levels between 31 vegans/plant-based participants and 26 omnivores has flagged the potential health risk.

Urine samples showed iodine readings of 44 ug/L in the plant-based group, compared to the meat eaters' 64 ug/L levels. Neither group came close to the World Health Organisation's recommended 100 grams per litre.

Participants from both groups who chose pink or Himalayan salt instead of iodised salt had severely deficient iodine levels, averaging 23 ug/L.

While the study was undertaken in South Australia, it builds evidence on a

2017 US study that found nearly two billion people worldwide were iodine deficient, resulting in 50 million experiencing clinical side effects.

UniSA research dietitian Jane Whitbread says adequate iodine is essential for fetal intellectual development.



"Mild to moderate iodine deficiency has been shown to affect language development, memory and mental processing speeds," Ms Whitbread says.

"During pregnancy, the need for iodine is increased and a 150mcg supplement is recommended prior to conception and throughout pregnancy. Unfortunately, most women do not take iodine supplements before conceiving. It is important to consume adequate iodine, especially during the reproductive years."

Dietary sources of iodine include fortified bread, iodized salt, seafood including seaweeds, eggs, and dairy foods.

Concerns about the link between poor iodine status and impaired neuro-

logical conditions in newborns prompted the mandatory fortification of non-organic bread with iodised salt in 2009 in Australia.

It has since been reported that women who consume 100g of iodine-fortified bread every day (approximately three pieces) have a five times greater chance of meeting their iodine intake compared to women who don't consume that much. The average amount of bread consumed by women in this study was one piece of bread.

A quarter of women in the study used pink salt which contains an insignificant level of iodine.

Neither group met the estimated average requirement (EAR) for calcium.

The vegan/plant-based group also did not reach the recommended levels for selenium and B12 without supplementation, but their dietary intake of iron, magnesium, vitamin C, folate and fibre was higher than the meat-eaters. This reflects the inclusion of iron-rich soy products, whole-meal foods, legumes, and green leafy vegetables in their diet.

The researchers recommended that both new salts and plant milk be fortified with iodine as well as a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of iodine in the diet, especially for women in their reproductive years.

They also called for a larger study sample to determine the iodine status of Australian women.

## THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

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

**Subject: Provisional Select List of candidates for Admission to B. Ed. Course-2020 in Government College of Education, Canal Road, Jammu; Fourth list thereof:**

Reference: (i) Notification No. 055-BOPEE of 2021 dated 16-04-2021  
(ii) Notice No. 042-BOPEE of 2021 dated 22-04-2021

**Notification No. 058-BOPEE of 2021**  
**Dated: 28-04-2021**

Consequent upon receipt of shortfall from Government College of Education, Canal Road, Jammu in respect of Notification No. 055-BOPEE of 2021 Dated 16-04-2021, the candidates figuring in Annexure "A" to this notification, have been provisionally selected for admission to B.Ed. Course-2021 in Government College of Education, Canal Road, Jammu. The Principal of the College will get the following certificates in original verified from the Incharge admission and countersigned by him/her before allowing the candidates to complete their admission formalities:-

- Qualifying Marks Certificate (10+2+3);
- Domicile Certificate of UT of J&K / Ladakh (for candidates belonging to UT of Ladakh, St certificate issued by Competent Authority of UT of Ladakh shall be treated as Domicile Certificate);
- Category Certificate, if any;
- Date of Birth (DOB) Certificate and
- Any other certificate required by the College in accordance with the rules.

The provisionally selected candidates are directed to report to the College from April to 06th of May, 2021 up to 4:00 P.M along with their relevant certificates in original.

The Head of the Institution shall send the details of candidates, who do not complete their admission as SHORT FALL on 06th of May, 2021 up to 5:00 P.M. to the BOPEE office, Jammu positively.

Note:  
i). In view of non-availability of the eligible candidates in the reserved categories, the said seats have been converted into open merit under Section-9 (2) of J&K Reservation Act-2004 and filled up from Open Merit category candidates as per merit:

- Scheduled Tribe (ST) = 02 Seats
  - Children of Defense Personnel (CDP) = 01 Seats
- ii). The Head of the Institution is advised to ensure to admit only those candidates whose documents are complete in all respects. In case of any deficiency found during the verification of documents / certificates including Marks Card, such candidate (s) should not be allowed admission in any case. Any lapse in this regard will be the sole responsibility of the concerned Head of Institution.
- iii). The Board has received one representation from candidate namely NAZMA HARUN bearing Rank 501 who could not join the Institution after being provisionally selected vide Notification No. 042-BOPEE of 2021 Dated 23-03-2021 due to genuine reason, the Board has accordingly considered her request and included her name in this notification.
- iv). The candidates with rank 175 (CDP), 177, (OSC) and 178 (ALC/IB) who were selected in their respective categories vide Notification No. 042-BOPEE of 2021 Dated 23-03-2021 are now/herby treated to have been selected in Open Merit. The Annexure "A" shall be available on the BOPEE website [www.ikbopsee.gov.in](http://www.ikbopsee.gov.in) only.

E&OE

**DIPK-NB-516/21**

No: BOPEE/Exam-17/2021

Dated: 28-04-2021

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

## Office Of The Executive Engineer Construction Division Kashmir, J & K SPORTS COUNCIL, SRINAGAR

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**  
**Fresh Short Term Tender Notice: E-NIT No: 02 of 2021-22**

DATE: 24.04.2021

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor, UT of Jammu & Kashmir, e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government for the following work:-

S. No	Name of work	Adv cost (Rs. in lacs)	Class of Contract	Cost of Tender documents	Technical Sanction No. & date	Administrative Approval No. & date	Time of Completion
1	2	3	4	5	7	8	6
1	Development of play field at Lal Bazar (Shaheed-e-Milat) by way of Electrification of pavilion building (Part-C).	1.00	Registered Electrical Contractor	Rs. 200/-	15/Estt of 2020-21 dt: 12/2020	Sports Council Order No: 38 of 2021 dt: 15.01.2021	30 days

Position of funds = Under Capex 2020-21

1. The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility Criteria, specification, 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) as per schedule of dates given below:-

### 2. Critical Dates Table

1.	Date of issue of Tender Notice.	24.04.2021
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents.	24.04.2021 from 4.00 PM to 01.05.2021 up 4.00 PM.
3.	Bid Submission Start Date.	26.04.2021 from 10.00 AM
4.	Bid Submission End Date.	01.05.2021 upto 04.00 PM
5.	Date & Time of opening of Bids (online)	03.05.2021 at 11.00 AM. in the office of Ex. Engineer, Const. Division Kashmir, J&K Sports Council at Administrative Block, Bakhshi Stadium, Srinagar.

3. The Cost of the tender documents shall be deposited into the bank account by the bidder for which the following information can be used by the bidder. (No Demand Draft shall be entertained).

- Name of Bank = J&K Bank Ltd.
- Account Title = Executive Engineer, Construction Div. Kmr, JKSC 3)
- Account No = CDG-0365010200000842
- Branch = Lal Mandi
- IFSC Code = JAKAOSBOARD

The bidders must upload the scanned copy of bank payment acknowledgment slip.

4. Hard Copy shall be obtained only from the bidder who is declared as Lowest Bidder (L1) after opening of Financial Bids.

**DIPK-NB-469/21**

Sd/-  
Ex. Engineer, CDK  
J&K Sports Council Srinagar

U.T of Jammu & Kashmir

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER ANANTNAG PWD(R&B) DIVISION QAZIGUND

**NOTICE INVITING TENDERS**

**NIT NO 05 OF R&B/Qazigund/2021-22 /E-TENDERING/610-25 DATED 27-4-2021**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Union Territory of J&K 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 each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rs)	Time of completion	Major Head of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 75 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick Bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Quarry Muck, on Khwajpora link on Verinag Jawahar Tunnel Road.	19.42/=	800/=	07 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO
2.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 100 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Khak Bajree on WaveTharoor Road.	25.00/=	800/=	07 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO
3.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 75 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Khak Bajree, on Nowpora inner Road.	31.00/=	1100/=	07 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO
4.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 75 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Khak Bajree on Gundi Hakura Road.	47.00/=	1100/=	10 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO
5.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 75 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Quarry Muck, on Polia Sadiwara link Road.	56.00/=	1600/=	12 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO
6.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 75 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Quarry Muck, on Lukbawan Kuchipora Road.	60.00/=	1600/=	12 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO
7.	Upgradation of road surface by way of Providing/Laying 75 mm thick WMM, 50 mm thick bituminous macadam 25mm thick semicircle including tack and seal coat and supply filling of Quarry Muck, on Verinag Feder Road.	82.00/=	1600/=	15 Days	Cities & Towns	AAY Class with HMP/ Registered HMPO

Position of AAA: Submitted

1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, 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) as per schedule of dates given below:

S. No.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	Dated
1		27-04-2021
2	Period of Downloading of bidder documents	From 01-05-2021 (11:00 PM) To 10-05-2021 (04:00 PM)
3	Bid submission Start Date	From 01-05-2021 (11:00 PM) To 10-05-2021 (04:00 PM)
4	Bid Submission End Date	From 10-05-2021 (04:00 PM) To 10-05-2021 (04:30 PM)
6	Date and time of opening of bid (online)	In the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund

2. Bids must be accompanied with cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan / Receipt in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division Qazigund [Tender Inviting Authority] (Name of Work to be mentioned on the Treasury Challan / Receipt) (Refer Govt. order No. O.M No. A/24 (2017)-651 Dt 07-06-2018 (The Date of Treasury Challan should be between the date of Start of Bid and Bid Submission End Date) pledged to Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund (Tender receiving Authority).

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

4. The 1<sup>st</sup> lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3% of contract as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 03 Days before fixation of Contract and shall be released after DLP is over.

5. The date and time of opening of Bid shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund.

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

7. The Performance Security shall be forfeited if:-

a) Successful Bidder fails to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

b) If at any stage of work, the Bidder back up from the contract, again the Performance security as well as work done claim will be forfeited.

8. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

a. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) to acquaint bid submission process.

b. 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 vendors.

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

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

e. Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid. The tender/ bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirement as laid down in NIT

9. Performance Security shall be released after DLP is over successfully.

10. All other terms and conditions are as same as laid in PWD Form 25.

**DIPK-967/21**

Er.Reyaz Ahmad  
Parrray  
Executive Engineer  
PWD(R&B) Division Qazigund

No. 610-25 DATED 27-4-2021



## COVID Case Surge May Put India's Economic Recovery At Risk: ADB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Indian economy is projected to grow at 11 per cent in the current financial year amid the "strong" vaccine drive, said ADB on Wednesday, while cautioning that the recent surge in COVID cases may put the country's economic recovery at "risk".

"India's economy is expected to grow 11 per cent in fiscal year (FY) 2021, which ends on March 31, 2022, amid a strong vaccine drive," ADB said in its flagship Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2021 released on Wednesday.

However, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) cautioned that the surge in COVID-19 cases

follows a 0.2 per cent contraction last year.

"The region's growth is forecast to moderate to 5.3 per cent in 2022. Excluding the newly industrialized economies of Hong Kong, China; the Republic of Korea; Singapore; and Taipei, China, developing Asia's economic activity is expected to grow 7.7 per cent this year and 5.6 per cent in 2022," said the report.

The report projects that most economies in developing Asia will see healthy growth this year and in 2022.

Developing Asia comprises 46 members of ADB list on the basis of geographic group. These include new industrialized economies, countries in Cen-



may put the country's economic recovery at risk. For FY2022, India's GDP is expected to expand at 7 per cent, it added.

Further, it said the gross domestic product (GDP) of South Asia is expected to rebound to 9.5 per cent this year, following a contraction of 6 per cent in 2020, before moderating to 6.6 per cent next year (2022), it said.

ADB said the economic growth in developing Asia is set to rebound to 7.3 per cent this year, supported by a healthy global recovery and an early progress on COVID-19 vaccines. The projected resur-

tral Asia, East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

The report said in China, strong exports and a gradual recovery in household consumption will boost economic activity this year.

China's gross domestic product (GDP) is forecast to expand 8.1 per cent in 2021 and 5.5 per cent in 2022. East Asia's GDP is expected to grow 7.4 per cent in 2021 and 5.1 per cent in 2022, it said. The report said rising exports are boosting some economies in Developing Asia amid strengthening global economic activity, including a rebound in manufacturing.

## Amazon India To Delist Covid-19 Products Priced Above MRP



Agencies

In a bid to prevent profit gouging, Amazon India has said it is in the process of removing listings of COVID-19 products priced above MRP.

Amid the second wave of COVID-19 and paucity of medical supplies, many sellers have tried to make extra profit by selling products at prices higher than the Maximum Retail Price (MRP).

Amazon said that it was disappointed with some sellers as they were "attempting to raise prices beyond the MRP on certain products amidst the pandemic".

"There is no place for price gouging on Amazon and in line with our policy we continue to actively monitor our marketplace and take neces-

sary action including removal of listings and suspension of accounts against sellers who are selling products above the MRP, which is in violation of Indian laws," the e-commerce platform said.

Amazon India, on April 27, announced that it had procured 100 ventilators and would import these to India in its bid to help the country fight the devastating second wave of COVID-19.

"Amazon has worked with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to ensure the ventilators are of acceptable technical specification and carried out its own compatibility checks to immediately fund 100 units of Medtronic's PB980 model and bring them into India for urgent use," the company shared in a blogpost.



## ...COVID-19 RESURGENCE

# Can't Afford Another Lockdown, But Life More Important: J&K Traders

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** Maintaining that the economy of Jammu and Kashmir has suffered a significant loss, traders from both the divisions Wednesday said that though they can't afford another lockdown but given the COVID-19 situation human life is more important as compared to business.

The Jammu and Kashmir government has ordered the closure of 50 percent market strength due to the steep rise in COVID-19 cases as a measure to contain the further spread.

Talking to the news agency, Jammu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) president Arun Gupta said that "We are very weak economically but what

matters is the safeguard of human life during the pandemic."

"We have seen subsequent lockdown back in 2019 and 2020 and the situation has come back to the same," Gupta said.

Cautioning that the situation is grim, the JCCI President said that "We can't afford a lockdown but due to this virus we will have to for the safety of people."

Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI), Sheikh Ashiq said that the lockdowns have impacted the economy by large but at this time safety is more important.

He maintained that the government has to look at all the traders since the bank will demand monthly interest rather than that

of 15 days (50 % market strength) while the economy has already taken a back seat two years back.

Kashmir Traders and Manufacturers Federation (KTMF), President Yaseen Khan said it is tough for traders to afford another lockdown since the community has suffered a lot in last year's lockdown but given the intensity of this deadly virus saving the life is more important.

"There is no other solution to this pandemic other than lockdown to contain the spread," he said.

He said that as compared to the past year's it seems that the people are out of money and that is why the business community is moving backward after each passing day. (KNO)

## KASHMIR TRADERS AND MANUFACTURERS FEDERATION (KTMF), President Yaseen Khan said it is tough for traders to afford another lockdown since the community has suffered a lot in last year's lockdown but given the intensity of this deadly virus saving the life is more important.

## Banks In J&K To Curtail Business Hours

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** In view of the steep rise in COVID19 cases across the country, the banks operating in J&K shall conduct banking business for public from 10 am to 2 pm with reduced staff presence in branches as well as in controlling offices.

According to a statement issued to the news agency, the new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will be implemented with immediate effect till May 31, 2021 to safeguard people amid huge spike in COVID19 cases in the UT of J&K.

Pertinently, soon after the communication from Indian Banks Association to SLBC/UTLBC Conveners advising them to hold deliberations with stakeholders regarding circumstances and issue appropriate advisories to banks; the J&K Bank, Convener J&K UTLBC, conducted a meeting through video conferencing.

The meeting was attended by President (LBD/UTLBC), Vice President (LBD/UTLBC) and senior level officers of the banks operating in the UT of J&K including SBI, PNB, JKGB, EDB, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, UCO Bank, Canara Bank, PSB, and JKSCB.

In order to strike a balance between public health and economic necessities of the people, the stakeholders unanimously proposed measures for implementation by the banks. The measures include curtailing



bank business time from 10 am to 02 pm with banking hours restricted from 10 am to 4 pm with reduced staff in branches as well as in controlling offices.

Urging the customers in particular and people in general to make use of digital channels for their banking needs and avoid visiting bank branches unnecessarily, Chairman and MD R K Chhibber said, "Together we have braved the first wave of the ongoing pandemic and with your support and cooperation, I believe, we shall overcome the second wave as well. However, we need to take precautions, follow guidelines issued by the government from time to time."

"Let me reiterate, J&K Bank will stand by all its stakeholders ensuring uninterrupted banking services and financial support within the regulatory framework while strictly following COVID-19 related protocols", he added.

Meanwhile, the UTLBC has also advised the local branches/offices of the banks to ensure uninterrupted banking services to the public through Branches, ATMs and Banking Correspondents besides facilitating credit needs in a smooth and seamless manner. Besides, all meetings, training events and camps shall be conducted through online mode to avoid mass gathering.

Furthermore, the UTLBC has urged all the banks to advise their customers to use the digital banking platforms, ATMs, Cash Deposit Machines, Recyclers, BC services etc., and abstain from visiting the Bank branches unless in case of unavoidable circumstances.

While implementing the new SOPs, the banks shall take all precautionary measures to prevent spread of the pandemic to safeguard the interest of the staff by ensuring the availability of sufficient masks, sanitizers and other safety devices.

## Finmin Relaxes Covid-Relief Material Import Norms For Indian Red Cross

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

The Finance Ministry has waived permissions required from any government departments for customs clearance of COVID-related relief material imported by the Indian Red Cross Society.

In instruction to field offices, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) said in the wake of the extraordinary situation arising out of the COVID pandemic, the issue of providing seamless clearance to such relief material received from foreign governments and imported by the Indian Red Cross Society was discussed in a meeting chaired by the Cabinet Secretary on April 27.

It was decided that in all cases of COVID related imports facilitated by Ministry of External Affairs and/or imported by Indian Red Cross Society, permissions/ licences/ authorisations required from other Government Department/Agencies prior to the clearance of goods, if any, would be deemed to have been given.

In other words, such cases need not be referred to those agencies or the requirement may be suitably waived, the CBIC said.

The CBIC, which is the apex body in Customs duty and clearance matters, also asked field offices to give the highest priority to these consignments and facilitate their clearance in the shortest possible time.

The indirect tax body also noted that donations of COVID-related material and medicines



from foreign governments, besides oxygen and related equipment, have also started arriving at Indian ports.

The government last week waived customs duty on the import of COVID vaccines as well as medical-grade oxygen and related equipment as the nation battles its worst health crisis with a "tsunami" of infections setting a new world record for cases.

In its fight against COVID, it had also waived customs duty on imported Remdesivir injections and the drug's active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) to boost supplies.

The CBIC had directed customs officers to clear all import consignments, including life-saving drugs and oxygen equipment, used in COVID treatment on the highest priority.

AMRG & Associates Senior Partner Rajat Mohan said, High priority Customs clearance coupled with a recent exemption for import duties on COVID-related relief material would strengthen the fight of a commoner against the pandemic.

India reported a record of 3,60,960 new infections on Wednesday, bringing its total to over 1.79 crore. Deaths also rose by a record 3,293 to 2,01,187.

## Maruti Suzuki Shuts Down Plants To Make Oxygen For Medical Needs

Agencies

Maruti Suzuki, the country's largest car maker, will shut down its manufacturing units in Haryana to make oxygen gas available for medical needs, the company said in a stock exchange filing. Suzuki Motor has also decided to shut down its manufacturing unit in Gujarat, Maruti Suzuki added.

The company advanced its annual maintenance shutdown to May 1 through May 9 from earlier plan of June, Maruti Suzuki said while adding that it is committed to support government in diverting oxygen for saving lives.

"As part of the car manufacturing process, Maruti Suzuki uses a small amount of oxygen in its factories while relatively

used to save lives," Maruti Suzuki said in a press release.

The company has been informed that Suzuki Motor Gujarat has taken the same decision for its factory, Maruti Suzuki said.

India's new Covid deaths hit an overwhelming peak with 3,293 people dying in the last 24 hours. New cases rose by over 3.6 lakh, a global high, pushing the total cases to over 1.79 crore. The crisis has left India grappling for oxygen and medicines.

This is the seventh straight day that over three lakh cases have been recorded in India, the second worst-hit country after the US. The fresh deaths, marking the deadliest day of the pandemic in the country, take its total fatalities to 2,01,187.

Maruti Suzuki shares trad-



much larger quantities are used by the manufacturers of components. In the current situation, we believe that all available oxygen should be

ed 0.44 per cent higher at 6,587 after announcing its decision to shut down plants, underperforming the Sensex which was up 1.6 per cent.

### SHORT TAKES

## Hand Knitting Back In Biz, Courtesy Millennials

Agencies

**CHANDIGARH:** There has been a huge resurgence in hand knitting business, courtesy millennials, especially hobby seekers, as they look for ways to pass time at home since the outbreak of Covid pandemic last year. The young generation has not only learnt the skill of knitting by using yarns but many of them have carved new businesses by retailing the knitted products on social media platforms.

"I have grown up watching my grandmother knitting sweaters and scarves for us, but never thought of learning the skill. However, during the lockdown, I learnt the skill and made wool-



len muffler and sweater for myself," says 28-year-old Nisha Anand from Jalandhar.

With many joining the bandwagon, it was an unusual year for Punjab-based hand-knitted yarn (wool) industry as it witnessed a double-digit growth in 2020-21 against a negative growth of 5% in 2019-20. The size of the hand-knitted yarn

industry in India is around Rs 350-Rs 400 crore and mainly concentrated in Punjab.

The demand for yarn comes from two categories — hobby seekers and professional knitters. While the former contributes 30-35% to the total demand, the latter contributes 60-65%. The market size of hand-knitted wool yarn is around 12,000 tonnes.

"People still enjoy using handmade products. However, at the same time, many new entrants forayed into the segment and started retailing through e-commerce and social media platforms bringing competition," said Nivesh Aroora, co-founder, Sonapat-based Ajoobaa, an apparel startup.

## Bill Gates Not In Favour Of Sharing COVID-19 Vaccine Recipe With Developing Nations

Agencies

Billionaire and co-founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates in an interview on April 27 took everyone by surprise by not sharing vaccine formulas with developing nations around the world.

In an interview with Sky News, Bill Gates was asked if it would be helpful to change intellectual property law in order to enable "the recipe for these vaccines to be shared."

To this Gates answered, "No. When asked, 'Why not?' Bill Gates explained, 'There's only so many vaccine factories

in the world and people are very serious about the safety of vaccines. And so moving something that had never been done, moving a vaccine, say, from a [Johnson & Johnson] factory into a factory in India, it's novel, it's only because of our grants and expertise that can happen at all."

"The thing that's holding things back in this case isn't intellectual property. It's not like there's some idle vaccine factory with regulatory approval that makes magically safe vaccines. You've gotta do the trials on these things. And every manufacturing process has to be looked at in a very careful



way," he further said.

However, as per the Business Insider report, Gates also said that getting vaccine manufacturers like Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson to share vaccine formulas has already happened.

"We got all the rights from the vaccine companies," he said. "They didn't hold it back,

they were participating." Bill Gates also stated that he wasn't surprised to see rich nations prioritising the vaccine for themselves.

"The fact that now we're vaccinating 30-year-olds in the UK and the US and we don't have all the 60-year-olds in Brazil and South Africa vaccinated, that's not fair, but within three or four months the vaccine allocation will be getting to all the countries that have the very severe epidemic," he said.

Earlier, in 2015, Bill Gates in a TED talk had warned of the potentially staggering death toll a world-wide pandemic could create.



## J&K Bank's Seer Hamadan Branch Shut After Six Employees Test Covid Positive

**ANANTNAG:** Authorities in South Kashmir's Anantnag district ordered the closure of J&K Bank Seer Hamdan branch for a week on Wednesday after six of its employees tested positive for Covid-19.

Officials said that the branch has been closed upon the directions by DC Anantnag after the employees tested positive.

The official said that all the primary and secondary contacts of the infected employees have been advised to self-isolate and quarantine themselves.

Pertinently, the Jammu Kashmir Bank Branches at Qamarwari, Budgam and some other places were also closed for a week for the same reason.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### 30 More Succumb

by virus were reported from Jammu division, raising the death toll to 2227 in J&K.

Among the victims from Valley, officials said, included an 82-year-old from Kishtwar, Asarabad who was admitted in a hospital on 24 April with bilateral CAP died last night.

An 85-year-old man from Gori Mohalla Brein Nishat also died last night at SKIMS Soura, they said. Two persons aged 70 and 65 years respectively from Chendilora Tangmarg and Kunzer also died at SKIMS Soura, they said.

A 75-year-old man from Badamwari Hawal Srinagar and a 76-year-old man from Zakura Srinagar also died due to the virus at the tertiary care hospital, they said.

A 58-year old woman from Balgarden Srinagar, who was admitted today with T2DM, HTN C B/L CAP, died at SMHS hospital.

A 60-year-old woman from Chanapora died at SKIMS Bemina, a day after she was admitted to the health facility, they said.

An 80-year-old man from Gousiya colony Kanispora Baramulla died at Indoor Stadium Baramulla, five days after he was admitted there.

Also, a 70-year-old man from Tangmarg, Baramulla died in Indoor Stadium Baramulla, they said.

A 75-year-old woman from Nowshera Srinagar died at CD Hospital, one of the exclusive facilities for the management of the covid-19 here, during the intervening night of April 27 and 28, they said.

A 50-year-old woman (official of Arts Emporium) from Tengpora Batamalo died at the CD hospital, they said.

Three persons succumbed to the virus at JLNH hospital, also among exclusive facilities for the covid-19 and the victims include a 62-year-old woman from Nawakadal Srinagar, a 65-year-old from Pampore in Pulwama district and a 45-year-old from palpora Srinagar.

Three deaths were reported at GMC Anantnag and the victims include a 65-year-old from Hiller, 69-year-old from KP Road, and 63-year-old man from Anantnag, they said. 12 deaths were reported from Jammu.

Among the fresh cases of infection, 2034 were reported from Kashmir Valley and 989 from Jammu division thus taking the total number of people infected by the virus since last year in the Union Territory to 169077.

Giving district-wise details, the officials said, Srinagar reported 951 cases, Baramulla 246, Budgam 199, Pulwama 82, Kupwara 79, Anantnag 160, Bandipora 59, Ganderbal 54, Kulgam 145, Shopian 59, Jammu 499, Udhampur 61, Rajouri 90, Doda 27, Kathua 87, Samba 50, Kishtwar 22, Poonch 26, Ramban 71 and Reasi 56.

Moreover, they said, 963 more patients have recovered—306 from Jammu Division and 657 from Kashmir. There are 24313 active cases, 9518 in Jammu and 14795 in Kashmir. (With GNS inputs)

### 84 Hour Lockdown

of section 144 CrPc to tackle virus spread. "There will be Complete Lockdown in Srinagar District from 7:00 pm Thursday (29/04/2021) to 7:00 am Monday (03/05/2021). Exemptions apply to essential services. Detailed order shall follow," Asad posted on his Twitter handle.

Earlier, the UT administration had announced a 34-hour curfew from 8 pm on Saturday.

On April 8, a night curfew from 10 pm to 6 am was imposed in the urban areas of eight districts, which was extended to the municipal and urban local body limits of all the 20 districts in the UT on April 20.

### 500-Bed Hospital

through a team of experts.

The meeting was informed that the administration has identified two patches of land in Jammu and Srinagar for the purpose.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam, Financial Commissioner, Health Atal Dulloo, the Union secretaries of the departments concerned and officers from the DRDO, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and the AFMS Institute participated in the meeting.

The chief secretary informed the meeting that the Union Territory has witnessed a consistent surge in the number of COVID-19 patients over the last few days.

The existing healthcare facilities are adequately catering to the needs of the patients, he said, adding that however, a continuation of this upward trend may lead to a shortage of COVID beds. To successfully mitigate the shortages in medical facilities, it was requested that the temporary DRDO COVID hospitals be constructed well in time, an official spokesperson said.

He further requested that the upcoming hospitals must be equipped with isolation beds having oxygen support and 125 fully-equipped ICU beds.

In the past, the DRDO built 1,000-bed temporary COVID hospitals across the country in approximately 12 days each

### KU Puts Off

government of J&K in the matter.

The meeting, chaired by Prof Neelofar Khan, was attended by top KU functionaries and

## Civil Military Liaison Meeting Held at Poonch

**POONCH:** Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Inder Jeet, convened a meeting on Saturday to review the issues pertaining to the Army in the district.

The officers who attended the meeting included Station Headquarter 93 Infantry Brigade C/O 56 APO, Station Headquarter 10 Infantry Brigade C/O 56 APO, Assistant defence estates officer Rajouri, Tehsildar Haveli, Tehsildar Surankote, Tehsildar Mankote and deputy Custodian Evacuee property Poonch.

At the outset, all the land issues pertaining to the district along with the security scenario in the backdrop of ceasefire were thoroughly discussed upon. The Deputy Commissioner asked for expediting the pending mutation cases of all those lands which

were in lawful possession of Army establishments. He took a serious note of pending land hiring cases. He argued for joint verification by both civil and military authorities of all defence lands whose cases are still unsettled. He also argued for timely demarcation of all such lands with a complete record of revenue extracts for future reference. Timeline for all such actions has been fixed for regular monitoring.

Seeking a quick action, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Revenue Officers concerned to regularly follow the pending land cases with Army authorities for their early disposal. He also asked Army authorities to maintain cordial relations with the civilians to facilitate better coordination and understanding in

matters of land and construction. He also suggested to ease the process of granting NOCs to the Army for construction purposes in Army land.

The DC also battled for frequent Civil Military meetings as a confidence building measure and timely disposal of land cases. He asked the Defence Estates Officer to resolve all the cases in consultation with the district administration.

Army authorities also assured that no stone will be left unturned to facilitate the day to day activities in the border areas and also people friendly measures will be taken up to ease the restrictions coming in the way of developmental activities of the local population residing in border areas.

officers including Dean Academic Affairs Prof Shabir A Bhat, Dean Colleges Prof Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Sangmi, Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, Controller of Examinations Prof Irshad A Nawchoo, Provost (Girls) Prof Aneesha Shafi, Provost (Boys) Prof Sheikh Aijaz Mohammad, Coordinator CBCS Prof Mohammad Shafi, Chief Proctor Prof Showket A Shah, In-Charge Director IT and SS Dr Maroof Qadri, Joint Registrar Dr Ashfaq A Zarri, Special Secretary to VC Dr Tanveer A Shah and President KUTA Dr Manzoor A Chachoo.

### Waqf Wants Less

to allow a minimum number of people and devotees for prayers. The CEO requested people to avoid assembling in large numbers during prayer times and play a responsible role in containment of virus spread.

"He stated that despite many endeavours by governments across the world, this virus continues to consume precious lives. He said in this regard it is imperative for the people to follow guidelines religiously and cooperate with administration so the lives can be saved," the official spokesperson said.

### Jama Masjid Closed

police officials visited Jama Masjid asking the Aqaf to suspend all congregational prayers at the Masjid as section 144 has come into effect.

### Vaccine Registration

cases, it has decided to allow everyone above 18 years of age to get vaccinated from May 1.

"An increased demand is expected once the vaccination is opened for all. For the purpose of crowd control, registering on CoWIN portal and making an appointment to get a vaccine will be mandatory for those aged between 18 and 45 years. Walks-in will not be allowed in the beginning so that there is no chaos," an official had said.

The inoculation process and documents to be provided to get the jab remains the same.

"Registration of citizens in 18-44 age group will start with only online registration on CoWIN from April 28 onwards," the ministry had said.

Also, from May 1, the types of anti-coronavirus vaccine and their prices will be displayed on the CoWIN portal for citizens to make an informed choice at the time of booking an appointment at a private vaccination centre.

While those aged 18 to 44 years will be eligible to receive vaccination on payment from any of the private COVID vaccination centres (CVCs), citizens below 45 years shall also be eligible to receive a jab from a government CVC in a state or Union Territory which decides to lower the minimum cut off age for eligibility.

As provided in the Liberalised Pricing and Accelerated National COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy document, all priority groups, such as healthcare workers, frontline workers and citizens above aged 45 years or more (as on 01.01.2022), shall continue to be eligible for vaccination free of cost from government CVCs, or on payment from private CVCs.

### J&K Expects

vaccines by May 20," Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education, J&K, Atal Dulloo said here.

He said 3,000 to 4,000 vaccination centres will be set up to ensure there is no rush during the vaccination drive.

We are preparing for vaccination of about 65 lakh people in the 18-45 age group from next month, a senior official said.

He said the government has vaccinated 22 lakh people in Jammu and Kashmir, which is 50 per cent of the target, so far in age groups of people above 45.

Referring to the increasing number of cases, Dulloo said the COVID-19 situation in the Union Territory is "challenging" with cases rising steadily, but there is no need to panic as there is no dearth of facilities, including oxygen beds and required medicines.

"There is a concern. The situation is challenging, as there has been continuous increase in the cases of COVID. There were 3,100 fresh cases reported yesterday," he said.

He said there are 22,000 active cases in Jammu and Kashmir and mortality rate is 1.3 per cent. Mortality has increased during the past few days, he said.

Dulloo said the health administration is fully geared up to deal with the situation while testing and treatment is going on effectively.

"We are doing 40,000 to 45,000 tests daily that includes 11,000 RT-PCR tests. We are going to increase the testing capacity soon", he said.

He said the government has declared 23 hospitals as fully dedicated COVID centres to deal with the situation.

### Ladakh Tourism

(LTTA) comprises of Leh-based All Ladakh Tour Operators Association, All Ladakh Hotel and Guest House Association, Ladakh Taxi Operators Cooperative Union, Ladakh Tempo Traveller Association, Ladakh Bikers Association and Rafting Association.

The resolution was prepared in support of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, All Ladakh Gompa Association, Anjuman Moin-Lil-Islam, Anjuman Imamia and Christian Association,

Merchant Association besides the Leh units of the BJP, Congress and Aam Aadmi Party.

The resolution resolved that during any instance of exploitation of this valuable local resource base in the shape of investment from outside sources, hidden or declared, direct or through any local agency, the local community and trade bodies will impose restrictions against such individuals, businesses or tourist trade enterprises, Kunzang, who was flanked by all the signatories, said.

These restrictions will be in the form of non-cooperation by the travel trade fraternity as well as community and political organisations, he said.

The resolution stated that the fast growing tourism sector does not only contribute immensely to the local economy, but has also evolved as a primary source of income and employment with the majority of the total population being dependent on the sector.

In recent years, there has been relentless pressure by big businesses and vested interests from outside Ladakh to usurp even this vital resource base from the local people. This development is strongly impacting not only our fragile ecosystem, but also investment opportunities and limited employment resources of the region, thus putting the interest of the local scheduled tribe population at risk, it said.

It added that Ladakh's local tribal population, in spite of an extremely challenging environment, have built a successful tourist infrastructure with limited resources in the form of hotels, guest houses, taxis, bikes, adventure sports and tour operators over a period of four decades.

Contributing to over 50 per cent of Ladakh's economy, and being the primary employment generating industry, it is imperative to ensure its sustainable growth in the future, the resolution said.

### Hospitals Running

cost Rs 1478, and according to doctors, a patient needs at least six doses worth Rs 8868.

"Most of the patients arrange these doses from outside, at very high cost," a doctor posted in SKIMS told Kashmir Observer.

SKIMS Medical Superintendent Dr. Farooq Jan maintained that the drug is out of stock "throughout India".

"While we don't procure Tocilizumab due to least requirement, Remdesivir was available earlier. But now, it is out of stock as the requirement increased manifold lately," Dr. Jan told Kashmir Observer.

When asked if it is not available, why do doctors in the hospital prescribe to patients, Dr Jan said, "It's not needed much, but still doctors prescribe it randomly. I will ask them not to prescribe it."

However, doctors working in COVID-19 designated facilities maintain that both Remdesivir and Tocilizumab have been found to be effective in many cases.

"We tried to avoid prescribing Remdesivir and Tocilizumab injections but other drugs were not found as effective as these two are," a doctor on Covid duty said. "We have raised the issue with the concerned authorities."

Notably, the Drug Controller General of India has designated Remdesivir as an institutional supply only drug in view of the emerging Covid situation and a quota of 10,500 vials per week has been fixed for J&K by GoI, at present, officials said.

However, doctors said that the quota may also be required to get enhanced in view of the emerging "grim situation."

But the attendants of the patients are finding it hard to manage the drug from market owing to shortage.

Earlier a doctor was quoted as saying that there is already shortage of Tocilizumab and it was surprising that J&K does not figure in the interim allocation list.

"It seems that central government has not been conveyed about the demand of the Tocilizumab by the concerned authorities," the doctor said and urged the concerned functionaries to express the concerns and ensure adequate supplies amid rising covid-19 cases.

Dr Yashpal Sharma, Managing Director Jammu and Kashmir Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (JKMSCL), said that there is shortage of Remdesivir across globally.

He said that the production of Remdesivir was actually closed after Covid-19 cases and but the production has been restarted after the recent spike.

"We have been given two companies namely Mylan and Sun Pharma and have already distributed over 4000 vials of Sun Pharma to hospitals in last few days," he said.

Meanwhile, Medical Superintendent, Chest Disease Hospital, Dr SaleemTak, told Kashmir Observer that the key drugs have arrived in GMC, and that they will be distributed to hospitals shortly.

### Top Babus, Officers

additional charge of administrative secretary, Mining department.

Hirdesh Kumar, Chief Electoral Officer, is also entrusted with the additional responsibility of administrative secretary of Transport department after the Election Commission of India gave nod for it.

Sarita Chouhan, Commissioner Secretary, Labour and Employment department, is also holding the post of Chairman Special Tribunal.

MM Raju, Commissioner Secretary, Jal Shakti department, is also holding other assignments including administrative secretary of Estates and Civil Aviation departments.

Simrandeep Singh, administrative secretary, Department of Disaster, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, is also discharging responsibilities as administrative secretary Information Technology department. He is also Chief Executive Officer, Jammu and Kashmir e-governance Agency.

Shahid Choudhary, who was recently posted as administrative secretary Tribal Affairs department, is also looking after assignments of Mission Youth and Skill Development Mission.

Sushma Chouhan, administrative secretary Higher Education department, is also holding additional charge of administrative secretary, Planning Development and Monitoring Department.

Sarmad Hafeez, administrative secretary, Tourism Department, is also holding additional charge of administrative secretary, Department of Culture.

Prasana Ramaswamy G, Director, Census Operation, is also holding charge of Managing Director, Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited.

Kumar Rajeev Ranjan, additional secretary, Revenue department, is also holding additional charge of Chief Executive Officer, Jammu and Kashmir Land Records Management Agency.

Syed Abid Rashid, Special Secretary, Finance department, is also holding two more posts - chief executive officer Jammu and Kashmir Economic Reconstruction Agency (JKERA) and Mission Director Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

A senior official in J&K administration said that severe shortage of IAS officers in the UT is primarily responsible for the additional charge system.

Earlier this year, the Centre merged IAS, IPS and IFS cadre of J&K with Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram & Union Territories (AGMUT) cadre due to dearth of All India Service (AIS) officers in the UT. KNO

### Met Forecast Light

the famous tourist resort in South Kashmir, he said.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a low of 7.6 degree Celsius against normal of 7.2 degree Celsius and last night's 7.2 degree Celsius, the official said.

Kupwara recorded a low of 5.5 degree Celsius against 5.1 degree Celsius on the previous night which is below normal by 2.3 degree Celsius for this time of the season in north Kashmir district, the official said.

Gulmarg, the world famous skiing resort in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, recorded a low of 5.0 degree Celsius against 4.0 degree Celsius on the previous night, the official said. It was 0.8 degree Celsius below normal in the resort, the official added. (GNS)

### HC Quashes

period of six months only.

"It is evident from the record produced by the respondents (officials) that allotments were made to its officers, other Government servants and the private persons just on their asking and there was no policy for the allotment of the flats/quarters," the court said, adding, "No advertisement was ever issued for the purpose of inviting applications for allotment of flats/quarters so as to enable other eligible persons to participate in the allotment process."

Rather no procedure was followed in allotment of Municipal Assets, the court observed. "The assets being the public property could not have been allotted in a manner as has been done by the respondent No. 3 in an arbitrary and opaque manner."

Four allottees were the officers/officials of the Municipal Corporation, the court said. One of them was initially allotted quarter in 1993 by Secretary, of then Jammu Municipality and strangely enough in 2012, when he was at the verge of his retirement, the rent deed for 40 years was executed, not only in his favour but also in favour of his Nephew, the court said in an order in a PIL by one Irtiza Mushtaq through advocate S. S. Ahmed.

Likewise, the court said, the flat/quarter was allotted to one when he was at the fag end of his service and for that purpose cattle pound was converted into a residential accommodation.

Similarly, quarter was also allotted to one in December 1983 and obtained allotment for himself from Secretary of Jammu Municipality in October 1983. "Thus, it is evident whosoever was at the helm of affairs of the Jammu Municipality, later on Jammu Municipality Corporation, the officers/officials at their sweet will distributed/allotted the Municipal assets to the persons either of their choice or chosen by their superiors."

So far as the other persons, who though are not employees of the Corporation but employees of Administrative Department i.e. Housing and Urban Development Department or other department, too have been allotted the residential accommodation in a similar manner,

## MD KPDCL Reviews Progress Of Projects Under Various CSSs

### Receiving Stations To Be Completed By 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**SRINAGAR:** The Managing Director (MD) Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL), Dr Basharat Qayoom on Wednesday took a detailed review of projects under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) viz RAPDRP, IPDS, DDUGJY, PMDP in Kashmir Valley during a meeting here. During meeting, the MD

reviewed the scheme wise progress of works/projects including 33/11KV Substations and all distribution works besides augmentation.

The various TKCS briefed the chair about the progress made till date and gave the deadlines for completion of various substations and other distribution works.

The meeting was informed that Receiving Station Chawalgam is almost complete and only some line related issues are pending and will be resolved within days.

the court said. "So far as the allotment made to NGO "PEACE" i.e. respondent No. 11 is concerned, it too has been allotted the residential accommodation, just on the asking of the respondent No. 11."

Two private persons too are also beneficiaries of similar type of orders passed by then officers of the Municipal Corporation, the court said. (GNS)

### Ex- Home Dept

According to his actual date of birth, he was supposed to have retired two years back in March, 2019, but by forgery and manipulations the accused has added four more years to his due government service, at a senior rank by taking undue advantage of his official position, the spokesperson said.

On the basis of a complaint and an inquiry report, he said the instant criminal case was registered on March 9 for an in-depth investigation.

Consequently, the accused was arrested to face the probe, the spokesperson said, adding that the accused was retrospectively superannuated from service on March 5 this year by the government with effect from the date on which he should have retired.

"During the further course of investigation, records were seized, statements of the witnesses were recorded and scientific evidence was sought which established that the accused had forged his date of birth from March 3, 1959 to March 3, 1963 by misusing his official position as a public servant," he said.

The spokesperson said the charges of hatching a criminal conspiracy, forgery, misuse of official position, cheating has been proved against the accused.

### Police Files Charges

sanction of prosecution from the government against three alleged militant associates of Hizbul Mujahideen identified as Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh, Asif Khazir Mir and Hilal Ahmad Mir in a case FIR No 209/2021 registered last year at the Police Station Ganderbal.

The case, he said, pertains to the militant attack in October last on a BJP District Vice President at his native village Nunner Ganderbal. In the attack and retaliatory action, a militant Shabir Ahmad Shah of Awantipora and the BJP leader's PSO Altaf Hussain were killed.

During the course of investigation, the police spokesperson said, the three militant associates were arrested.

"Investigation revealed that all the three were part of a criminal conspiracy and worked as associates with HM in carrying out attack on the BJP leader. Incriminating materials including arms/ammunitions, detonators, Pak flags were recovered on their disclosures and investigation concluded," he added.

### Falling Tree Kills

cut by labourers near his residence, reports said. Wagay, as per the reports, was removed to the district hospital Shopian for treatment. However, the doctors referred him to SKIMS, Srinagar for advanced treatment.

Wagay, according to the reports, breathed his last at the institute on Wednesday morning.

A pall of gloom descended in Balpora when Wagay's body was brought to the village for funeral rites. He was laid to rest amid tears and sobs.

### Man Booked For

it has been ascertained that the act is an offence as per Wildlife Act 1972 under sections 2(16)(b) and section 9, the official said, adding that "We have conveyed it to the police station concerned to take immediate action against the offender." When contacted SHO Mendhar Manzoor Kohli said that a case FIR number 110/2021 under the cited sections by Wildlife department authorities of Wildlife Act 1972 has been registered and further action being taken up.

The accused Mohammad Shakil, resident of Sandote in Balakote area can be seen hitting the bird - Common Myna - on its legs with a stick - in a two-minute and eighteen second chilling video. Using expletives on the bird tied to a tree, the accused can also be seen uttering words like "Tell the truth, how many squabs (baby pigeons) has it eaten..." (GNS)

### Bear Injures

an alarm inviting attention of the villagers who rushed to his rescue.

However, in the surprise attack, Dar suffered serious injuries. The villagers shifted him to a nearby hospital for treatment. However, the doctors there referred him to Srinagar hospital for advance treatment. Soon after the incident, reports said, a wildlife team reached the spot to assess the situation.

### Car Crash Kills

The injured were immediately evacuated to sub-district hospital Uri. However, the woman with critical injuries succumbed on the way to the hospital. Block Medical Officer (BMO) Uri, Dr Mohammad Ramzan Mir said the woman was brought dead to the SDH Uri.

"Husband of the deceased has been referred to GMC Baramulla on administering first-aid", the official added.



## 'IPL's Bio-Bubble Most Vulnerable, Should Have Been Held In UAE,' Says Adam Zampa



Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Australian leg-spinner Adam Zampa on Tuesday said he decided to quit the IPL midway as it was the "most vulnerable" bio-bubble he has been a part of and the tournament should have been held in UAE, like last year.

Zampa and Kane Richardson, who were part of the Royal Challengers Bangalore squad, were set to fly back home later on Tuesday, having pulled out citing personal reasons.

Speaking to the Sydney Morning Herald, Zampa said he felt a lot safer in the UAE where the IPL was held last year.

"We've been in a few (bubbles) now, and I feel like this is probably the most vulnerable. I just feel like because it's India, we're always being told about the hygiene over here and being extra careful... I just felt like it was the most vulnerable."

"The IPL that was held in Dubai six months ago didn't feel that way at all. I felt like that was extremely safe. Personally, I feel like that would have been a better option originally for this IPL, but obviously, there's a lot of political stuff that goes into it."

"Obviously there's the T20 World Cup that's meant to be happening here later this year. That's probably going to be the next discussion in the cricket world. Six months is a long time," said the leg-spinner.

Zampa, who did not get a game this season after being bought for Rs 1.5 crore, said a lot of factors contributed to his decision to leave the IPL.

"Obviously the COVID situation over here is pretty dire. I just felt, rocking up to training and stuff, obviously, I wasn't playing in the team as well, I was going to training and I wasn't finding the motivation."

"There were a few other things like bubble fatigue and the chance to get home, once all the news broke about the flights and everything, I thought this was the best time to make the call."

There are contrasting views on whether the IPL should continue amid the raging second COVID wave in India.

On that subject, Zampa said: "There's a lot of people coming out and saying games of cricket could be a reprieve for some people but that's also going to be a personal answer."

"Someone who has a family member on their death bed probably doesn't care about the cricket."

Zampa has no regrets about the financial loss he suffered by withdrawing from the lucrative league.

"I feel like for leaving anyone leaving halfway through a tournament, it's definitely a financial sacrifice. But from my point of view I wanted to put my mental health first."

He also lauded fellow Australian Pat Cummins, who has donated USD 50,000 to help purchase oxygen supplies for India's severely strained hospitals.

"Obviously really generous. I think we'll probably see more of it now. My thoughts go out to everyone over here. I understand how dire the situation is. It's bigger than cricket."

## Mohd Rizwan Enters Top 10, Virat Kohli Remains Static In ICC T20 Rankings

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** India captain Virat Kohli and senior opener KL Rahul maintained their fifth and seventh places respectively in the latest ICC's ranking for T20 batsmen.

Pakistan's Mohammed Rizwan made an entry into top-10.

The 28-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman's unbeaten knocks of 82 and 91 in the first and third matches have helped him gain five slots to reach 10th position, overtaking the likes of England captain Eoin Morgan and India opener Rohit Sharma.

Rizwan is the second-highest ranked Pakistan batsman in the list, only behind captain Babar Azam, who is now in third place.

The list is still topped by England's Dawid Malan with 892 points while Aaron Finch is placed second with 830 points.

However India has no representation in the top-10 of either bowlers or all-rounder's list.

In the list of Test batsmen, Kohli is



again placed fifth while Rohit Sharma is tied seventh at the moment.

Kane Williamson is still holding the pole position among Test batsmen while Pat Cummins (908) has a significant (48 points) lead at the top among bowlers over India's Ravichandran Ashwin (850).

Among Test all-rounders, Ravindra Jadeja is placed third with Ashwin a notch below. The list is topped by Jason Holder.

Earlier, India captain Kohli had lost his top rank in ODI charts to his Pakistani counterpart Babar Azam.

### IPL 2021, KKR VS DC, PREVIEW

## Floundering KKR Face Massive Test Against DC

Press Trust of India

**AHMEDABAD:** Kolkata Knight Riders' floundering batting will be put to test once again as they look to build a winning momentum against a star-studded Delhi Capitals in their Indian Premier League match here on Thursday.

KKR's batting woes emanate right from the top with the highly talented Shubman Gill continuing his poor run — 89 runs from six outings.

While their bowling, especially the 'master-apprentice' spin duo of Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarthy, have done an excellent job in restricting the oppositions, KKR's top-order batting has hurt them the most.

Chasing an easy 124 against Punjab Kings in their last match, KKR's top-order cut a sorry figure to be at 17 for 3 inside three overs before skipper Eoin Morgan led from the front to snap their four-match losing streak.

Against a DC batting line-up boasting tournament's leading run getter Shikhar Dhawan (265 runs), Prithvi Shaw, Steve Smith and the dangerous Rishabh Pant, KKR can't afford any more slip-up if they want to continue their ascent in the IPL points table.

First-up, Morgan will have to fix the Gill conundrum. With scores of 15, 33, 21, 0, 11 and 9, the opener has failed to impress, extending his poor run of form from the England



Test series.

It would not be a bad ploy to drop Gill down the order and bring back Narine to open with Rahul Tripathi, something that was suggested by the legendary Sunil Gavaskar.

The top-order reshuffle may be the way forward as the likes of Morgan, Andre Russell and Dinesh Karthik looked to have found their mojo in the middle.

Thursday's clash will see a mini battle between the Caribbean duo of Russell and Shimron Hetmyer who will be anxious to do well after the Capitals suffered an agonising one-run defeat against Royal Challengers Bangalore here on Tuesday.

Chasing 172 for a win, the Capitals were struggling at 92 for 4 but Hetmyer upped the ante in company of his captain and another left-

hander Pant as the duo smashed explosive half-centuries but only to go down in a last-ball thriller.

Russell too looked in his elements when he smashed Chennai Super Kings bowlers all around the park in his 22-ball 54 but only in a losing cause. It remains to be seen who among the Caribbean duo wins the battle on Thursday.

After Ravichandran Ashwin's pulling out, the Capitals' bowling got a boost from Ishant Sharma who cleaned up the in-form Devdutt Padikkal with a peach of a delivery en route to a tidy 1/26.

KKR batting will be put to test against the likes of Ishant, Kagiso Rabada and young gun Avesh Khan, while the spin duo of Amit Mishra and Axar Patel will also look to make an impact.

### MI VS RR, PREVIEW

## MI Look To Address Middle-order Woes, Face Unpredictable RR

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Defending champions Mumbai Indians will look to sort out their middle-order woes and bring their campaign back on track when they take on an inconsistent Rajasthan Royals in an IPL game here on Thursday.

MI are coming into the match after suffering back-to-back losses, the last one being a nine-wicket defeat against Punjab Kings in Chennai and need to start the Delhi leg afresh.

The Sanju Samson-led Rajasthan have lost thrice in the tournament so far and will seek to build on the six-wicket win over Kolkata Knight Riders in the previous match.

Mumbai skipper Rohit Sharma (201 runs) has got starts but hasn't played a big knock and the Mumbai-baikaar would be itching to get one as would be his opening partner Quinton De Kock (47 runs).

But Mumbai's middle-order, which boasts of hard-hitting batsmen like Suryakumar Yadav (154 runs), Ishan Kishan (73 runs), Hardik Pandya (36 runs), Krunal Pandya (29 runs) and Kieron Pollard (65 runs), hasn't fired in unison so far.

The middle-order can pummel any good attack into submission on any given day and Sharma would hope for their batting to click on Thursday when the action shifts to the Feroz Shah Kotla ground here.

In the bowling department, pace duo of Trent Boult (6 wickets) and Jasprit Bumrah (4 wickets) have been exceptional, particularly at the death.

Leg-spinner Rahul Chahar (9



wickets) and Krunal (3 wickets) have also been impressive and will again need to play their parts to perfection.

Pollard is used as the fifth or the sixth bowler even as Hardik plays solely as a batsman.

Mumbai, however, might play Adam Milne in place of Jayant Yadav. Rajasthan, on the other hand, have a lot of issues to ponder over, particularly in the absence of key foreign players Jofra Archer, Ben Stokes, Liam Livingstone and Andrew Tye.

RR are yet to have a settled opening combination. They tried Manan Vohra (42 runs) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (22 runs) at the top but both failed to convert their starts.

Englishman Jos Buttler would need to score big to compliment his skipper Sanju Samson, who is the team's leading run-scorer (187) despite being inconsistent.

And the likes Shivam Dube, David Miller and Riyan Parag, would

have to support the top-order by chipping in with much-needed contributions.

All-rounder Chris Morris (9 wickets and 48 runs) has blown hot and cold and will again be under pressure to deliver his high price tag.

Left-arm pacer Chetan Sakariya (7 wickets) has been a revelation, while the experienced duo of Jaydev Unadkat (4 wickets) and Mustafizur Rahman (4 wickets) have been decent. The three left-arm pacers along with Morris, however, need to be consistent.

Leg-spinner Rahul Tewatia has got just one wicket from five games, while Shreyas Gopal, another leggie, has gone wicket-less in the two games he has played.

Tewatia's role would be crucial if the Royals aim to contain the MI batting line-up, keeping in mind Amit Mishra's performance for Delhi.

The dew won't be a factor on Thursday as it is an afternoon game.

## 'I Have Total Control In Team And Selection Matters,' Says Skipper Babar Azam

Press Trust of India

**KARACHI:** Pakistan's top batsman Babar Azam on Wednesday dismissed criticism that he was a powerless captain, who took dictation from head coach, Misbah-ul-Haq.

The top ODI batsman frequently faces accusations of being a captain without authority and recently former skipper Shoaib Malik in tweets inferred that Babar was not taking independent decisions.

Some other former captains and players have also advised Babar to be more authoritative

happy," he said.

The Pakistan captain also said that the two-Test series that starts in Harare against Zimbabwe from Thursday would not be an easy assignment for his team.

He said they would more or less go with the same combination that was played in the home series against South Africa.

Babar said that Zimbabwe might be low in Test rankings but no team could be taken lightly at the top level and that the African nation would have the advantage of playing at home.



as captain. Babar said in a virtual press conference that the debate over whether he was a captain with authority should end now.

"I don't understand but frequently it is said in press conferences and in the media that I don't have authority and don't take independent decisions," Babar said.

"I want to make it clear once and for all that I have total control and say in team selection and other matters. I handle everything on the field and I decide the playing eleven with the management giving their input. I know what my responsibilities are as captain," he said.

Babar also made it clear he had no issues with the head coach and whether Pakistan needed a white ball coach was the domain of PCB.

"The team management is fully supporting every player, so I am

The Test batsman also said he was not worried about the frequent middle order failures in the white ball series.

Asked about the absence of seasoned leg-spinner, Yasir Shah from the series due to an injury, Babar said experience is always missed but Pakistan had other good spinners in Nauman Ali Nawaz and Zahid Mahmood.

Yasir since his debut in 2014 has missed a series only once when Pakistan played a lone test in Ireland and a two Test series in England in 2018.

Responding to a question that many people felt he was a selfish player, Babar said he does not agree.

Babar also said he was working hard on getting into the mode of finishing off matches and also try to convert 50s into 100s and 100s into bigger scores.

## India Relay Team On Verge Of Missing Out On Olympic Qualifiers

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Star sprinters Hima Das and Dutee Chand might miss the Olympic qualifying World Athletics Relays in Poland on May 1 and 2 as the Indian team's connecting flight to Amsterdam has been suspended following the record-shattering spike in the country's COVID-19 case load.

The women's 4x100m and the men's 4x400m relay teams were to board a KLM flight to Amsterdam in the wee hours on Thursday but the Dutch government has suspended flights from India effective Monday evening.

The Athletics Federation of India is trying to book an alternate flight available to any European city en route to Silesia in Poland where the event will be held. There is no direct flight to Poland from India.

"There is a serious doubt that our team may not be able to take part in the World Relays. Many European countries have suspended flights from India. So, we may be stuck and there is a high possibility that the team may not go for the event," a top AFI official told PTL.

"But still we are trying, talking to the government and to our embassies if they can help our athletes to fly in any European city like Frankfurt from where they can proceed to Poland. We are also trying for any connecting flight to Dubai or any other West Asian city."

S Dhanalakshmi, who had beaten Dutee in the final of women's 100m sprint in the Federation Cup last month, was also named in the team, along with Archana Suseendran, Himashree Roy and AT Daneshwari.

India will also field teams in the men's 4x400m in the event to be held in Chorzow, Silesia, in Poland. The top eight teams from the World Athletics Relays will automatically qualify for the Tokyo Olympics.

The women's 4x400m relay team has pulled out of the event as more than two members are unfit.

The Indian mixed 4x400m relay team has already qualified for the Tokyo Olympics after reaching the final during the 2019 World Championships in Doha.

The AFI was hopeful of the women's 4x100m relay team qualifying for the upcoming Olympics in Tokyo.

The World Relays will be the first major international event for Indian sprinters since the Asian Athletics Championships in Doha in April 2019.

## COVID Impact: Asian Boxing Championship Moved From Delhi To Dubai

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Asian Boxing Championship which was scheduled to be held here next month was on Wednesday moved to Dubai because of the deepening COVID-19 crisis in India but the national federation will remain a co-host along with its UAE counterpart.

The tournament was to be held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium from May 21 to 31 in the national capital, which is recording over 20,000 daily cases right now.

"In the wake of international travel restrictions to India, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI), in consultation with Asian Boxing Confederation (ASBC), has decided to conduct the upcoming 2021 edition of the ASBC Asian Elite Men and Women Boxing Championships in Dubai," the BFI said in a statement.

"The event will now be organised by BFI in association with UAE Boxing Federation."

The daily addition of over 3 lakh new cases has led to several countries imposing bans on flights to and from India.



"...with the newly-imposed international travel restrictions from many countries due to the prevailing pandemic situation, BFI and ASBC jointly took a decision to relocate the tournament," the BFI said.

The national body's President Ajay Singh said it was a difficult decision but one that had to be taken.

"It's unfortunate that we have to shift the venue out of India. We were very keen to host the championships in Delhi but we are left with no options," he said.

"Boxers' safety is the most important concern for us and hence

we had to take this decision. We closely monitored the situation and after deliberation with ASBC as well as the Government of India, we decided to conduct the tournament in Dubai," he added.

In a communication to all the member national federations, ASBC informed that the upcoming edition of the championships will now take place between May 21 to June 1.

The Indian men's team for the event is yet to be announced but the women's team has been named and will be spearheaded by the iconic MC Mary Kom (51kg).

## Madrid Draw 1-1 Against Chelsea In Champions League Semifinal

Agencies

**MADRID:** With a dominant start and a milestone goal by Christian Pulisic, Chelsea showed its strength against Real Madrid in the Champions League semifinals.

Chelsea took control early in Tuesday's first leg to hold the Spanish powerhouse to a 1-1 away draw, with Pulisic becoming the first U.S. international to score in the tournament's last four.

He also surpassed DaMarcus Beasley to become the top American scorer in Champions League history with five goals.

A red-hot Karim Benzema equalized for a lacklustre Madrid squared on a rainy night at the Alfredo Di Stefano Stadium in the first Champions League match since the controversial Super League folded last week amid widespread criticism.

The largely closed breakaway competition would have had Real Madrid as one of its leaders, and Chelsea also was among its founding members before dropping the idea along with the other English clubs.

Madrid didn't officially back out of the Super League but had downplayed the possibility of retaliation by UEFA in its Champions League matches. There were no refereeing controversies in Tuesday's match.

The second leg is on May 5 in London. Manchester City hosts Paris Saint-Germain in the other semifinal on Wednesday.

Chelsea got off to a fast start and had chances to add to its lead after Pulisic opened the scoring with a nice finish in the 14th minute off a high pass by Antonio Rudiger inside the area.

Pulisic calmly got past goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois before hitting the net past the Madrid defenders trying to block his shot at the goal line.

"It was a great finish, great composure," Chelsea captain Cesar Azpilicueta said of the 22-year-old Pulisic, who has been thriving after being marred by injuries early in the season.

"He's an amazing player, he's a young player, he's growing and improving. I'm very pleased with his goal because he's an important player for the team."

Pulisic is the second U.S. inter-

national to play in a Champions League semifinal after Beasley for PSV Eindhoven in a first-leg game against AC Milan in 2005.

Madrid evened the match on Benzema's volley from inside the area in the 29th, and there were few significant chances either way during the rest of the game.

Benzema's goal came a few minutes after he clipped the post with a long-range shot. The French striker controlled a loose ball with his head before turning and firing a volley into the top of the net for his 13th goal in his last 14 matches. It was Benzema's 16th goal in his last 17 home games with Madrid.

Chelsea gave little space to Madrid and was the more dangerous team early on at the Di Stefano in Madrid's training complex. The hosts struggled defensively with their set-up of three central defenders.

"We started the game very, very well — very aggressively, with a lot of quality," Chelsea coach Thomas Tuchel said.

"We deserved to win the first half. We had a lot of chances. We

should have scored at least one more when the chances and half-chances were there."

Not long before Pulisic's opener, Timo Werner had his strike from in front of the goal stopped by a superb reflex save by Courtois, a former Chelsea player.

"It's true that it was a complicated first half," Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said.

"But we are still alive going into the second leg. We are happy with the result in general."

Former Chelsea forward Eden Hazard, coming off a long injury layoff, entered the match in the second half but couldn't find space to spark Madrid to victory.

Madrid, making a record 14th semifinal appearance, won three straight Champions League titles from 2016-18, before Cristiano Ronaldo left, but the 13-time champion was eliminated in the round of 16 in the last two editions.

Chelsea won the European title in 2012 and returned to the semifinals two years later, but hadn't been back to the last four since.



## Serum Institute of India cuts Covid Vaccine Price For States To Rs 300 Per Dose



### Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** Serum Institute of India (SII) -- the maker of the most used COVID-19 vaccine in the country -- on Wednesday announced a cut in price of the jab it plans to sell to states to Rs 300 per dose from the earlier Rs 400.

This follows widespread criticism of its pricing policy as it had sold the initial doses of Covishield to the central government at Rs

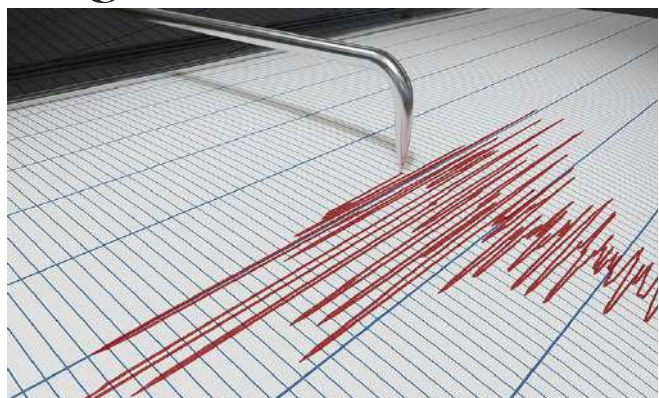
150 per dose.

SII's CEO Adar Poonawalla took to Twitter to announce the "philanthropic" gesture.

"As a philanthropic gesture on behalf of @SerumInstIndia, I hereby reduce the price to the states from Rs 400 to Rs 300 per dose, effective immediately; this will save thousands of crores of state funds going forward.

This will enable more vaccinations and save countless lives," he said.

## Massive Quake Of 6.4 Magnitude Hits Assam



### Agenceis

A massive earthquake of 6.4 magnitude hit Assam on Wednesday morning, causing widespread damage in the Northeast state, officials said.

Tremors were felt in the entire region, including neighbouring Meghalaya and northern parts of West Bengal, they said.

The quake hit Sonitpur district at 7.51 am, they added.

It was followed by two more jerks of 4.3 and 4.4 magnitudes at 7.58 am and 8.01 am, respectively. Tremors were felt in the entire

region, including neighbouring Meghalaya and northern parts of West Bengal, they said.

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## India Reports 3,60,960 New COVID-19 Cases, 3293 Deaths In Biggest Spike In 24 Hours

### Agenceis

India saw a record single-day rise of 3,60,960 coronavirus cases, which pushed the total tally to 1,79,97,267, while the death toll crossed two lakh following 3,293 fresh fatalities, according to Union health ministry data updated on Wednesday.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease is 1,48,17,371, while the case fatality rate stands at 1.12 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Registering a steady increase, the active cases have risen to 29,78,709, comprising 16.55 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has further dropped to 82.33 per cent, it said.

The death toll stands at 2,01,187, the data stated.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7 last year, 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, one-crore mark on December 19 and 1.5 crore on April 19.

According to the Indian Council



of Medical Research, 28,27,03,789 samples have been tested up to April 27 with 17,23,912 samples being tested on Tuesday.

The 3,293 new fatalities include 895 from Maharashtra, 381 from Delhi, 264 from Uttar Pradesh, 246 from Chhattisgarh, 180 from Karnataka, 170 from Gujarat, 131 from Jharkhand, 121 from Rajasthan and 100 from Punjab.

The total 2,01,187 deaths reported so far in the country include 66,179 from Maharashtra, 15,009 from Delhi, 14,807 from Karnata-

ka, 13,728 from Tamil Nadu, 11,678 from Uttar Pradesh, 11,082 from West Bengal, 8,630 from Punjab, 7,800 from Andhra Pradesh and 7,782 from Chhattisgarh.

The health ministry said more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

## It Appears Centre Wants People to Die, Says Delhi HC on New Protocol on Remdesivir Use

### Agenceis

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi High Court Wednesday said it appeared that the Centre wanted people to die as according to the new protocol on use of Remdesivir for COVID-19 treatment, the drug was to be given only to those on oxygen support.

"This is wrong. This is a complete non-application of mind. Now people who do not have oxygen will not get Remdesivir either. It appears you want people to die," Justice Prathiba M Singh said to the central government.

It appears the Centre was changing the protocol to reduce the shortage of the drug, the high court said.



"This is complete mismanagement," the court added.

It was hearing a plea by a lawyer who is suffering from COVID-19 and was able to get only

three out of the six doses of Remdesivir required.

Due to court's intervention, the lawyer got the remaining vials on Tuesday (April 27) night.

## Career Choices In A Post-Pandemic World

### Agenceis

The global pandemic has created an upheaval in many businesses, bringing some industries like travel, tourism and events to their knees, while creating extraordinary growth in healthcare, health research, e-commerce, and virtual communications industries.

The secondary and post-secondary education landscape has been impacted immensely too, with high schools and universities having to continuously adapt to unpredictable changes brought on by the pandemic, educator, counsellor and entrepreneur Ganesh Kohli tells IANSLife.

Founder of the IC3 Movement and the Chair of Board of Trustees at the IC3 Institute, Kohli writes: "Students at the brink of graduating from high school and poised to make long-term career decisions are a group particularly sensitive to the constantly evolving situation. Not only are they impacted by the changes in the learning environment, they are also affected by the constant changes to board examination schedules, changes in geopolitical movement and policies, and upheavals in the job industry, with some of them probably having to reconsider the career choices they were about to make.

"Change is the only constant, bringing with it great potential for growth, and not all changes have been unfavourable. Virtual learning environments, which were the exception rather than the norm pre-pandemic, have thrived and created learning opportunities that transcend physical boundaries, creating access to learning resources for students all over the world. One cannot deny that the pandemic has offered a great window for self-directed study and has demonstrated the power of technology and marketing."

In this time of uncertainty for students, Kohli shares suggestions on what is needed for effective decision-making in career building:

### Focus on soft skills

Learning in the pandemic world lies outside the classroom. A supremely critical skill brought to the fore by the pandemic is the ability to learn and unlearn new things and apply them in rapidly changing contexts. The Future of Jobs Sur-



vey (2020) report published by the World Economic Forum lists analytical thinking and innovation, active learning strategies, complex problem solving, critical thinking and analysis, leadership and social influence, creativity and originality, emotional intelligence, resilience, reasoning and ideation, and service orientation among the top skills employers will be looking for by 2025. The trying global situation is an exemplary period for developing some of these skills such as leadership, resilience, courage, emotional intelligence, service-orientation, among others.

Going forward, some industries may shape differently from others and the technical skills needed for careers will evolve rapidly. In the face of this reality, students need to start thinking about how their interests align with career paths that will be most valuable and fields that will see the most growth. For students interested in science and technology, medicine and engineering are no longer the only viable choices. Health services beyond traditional medicine, health research, AI, data analytics, cloud computing, cybersecurity, etc are going to need massive human resources.

Once the dust settles, the fields of human and social development are also going to witness growth, with a growing need for social workers, and volunteerism and social work becoming important on student resumes. More than ever before, the jobs of tomorrow showcase the continuing importance of human interaction in the new economy through roles in marketing, sales, content production, and other positions that require communication skills. It is now all the more imperative for students to focus on digital learning, soft skills, and vocational education, to emerge as job-ready

in the post-pandemic world.

### The paradox of choice

Today, there are several routes to a satisfying career. A well-paying job is an ineffective metric for success. Meaning and purpose in your job are important factors for job satisfaction. With a renewed perspective on what a 'dream job' constitutes, the possibilities of what makes a successful career are boundless. However, hundreds of options inevitably result in the 'paradox of choice'. Setting students up for success and supporting them with professional guidance as they make critical choices about what to study, where to study, and how to make it happen in a post-pandemic world is a responsibility that lies with their schools. Career counseling in schools can help students explore a range of careers by assessing their personality, interests, strengths and weaknesses. It helps them achieve the desired confidence to make decisions with the support of an experienced mentor. It is now more critical than ever for schools to invest their human resources to provide career guidance and counseling to their students. Organisations like the IC3 institute are relentlessly working towards providing this support to high schools, enabling them to set up fully functional counseling departments. IC3 is focused on training teachers and principals to become career counselors and support their students as they deal with a rapidly evolving career landscape.

A career is a lifelong journey of self-exploration and self-expression. The right counseling at the right time is a critical tool to help students get set for this journey. It gives them guidance and direction.

### NEWSMAKERS

## UP Man's 'Sensational' Tweet Asking For Oxygen Cylinder Lands Him In Jail

### Agenceis

**AMETHI:** The police have booked a man here under the Epidemic Act, accusing him of creating fear among the people after he went on Twitter asking for an oxygen cylinder for his 88-year-old relative.

"Need oxygen cylinder, ASAP," Shashank Yadav had tweeted on Monday, and tagged Bollywood actor Sonu Sood.

On Tuesday, Union minister and Amethi MP Smriti Irani tweeted in response, "Called Shashank thrice. No response on the number shared by you in your tweet."

She also said she had alerted the District Magistrate and Amethi Police to find the person and help him.

When asked about the matter, Superintendent of Police Dinesh Singh said on Wednesday Yadav had tweeted for a distant relative.

"When he was called, he did not



pick up. We thought he might be in some problem and therefore he was not picking up the phone. So we used surveillance and tracked his location and reached his house, where he was found sleeping."

Singh said.

"Shashank's motive was to create sensation and fear," he added.

The Amethi Police tweeted on Tuesday, "Neither the patient had Covid-19 infection nor did he re-

quire oxygen. He died due to cardiac arrest at 8 pm Monday. Making such tweets are not only condemnable but also an offence."

In his tweet, Yadav also had not said that his relative was Covid-19 positive. An FIR was lodged against Yadav under relevant sections of the Epidemic Act, and he was served a notice under section 41 of the CrPC (requiring appearance before police to prevent the person from committing any further offence), the SP said.

Yadav was taken to a police station for questioning, but was later let off, he said.

Chief Medical Officer, Ashutosh Dubey said Yadav's relative was not COVID-19 positive and was receiving treatment under a private doctor.

The patient was also not taken to the nearby community health centre and did not die due to lack of oxygen, he added.

**WHEN HE WAS CALLED, HE DID NOT PICK UP.** We thought he might be in some problem and therefore he was not picking up the phone. So we used surveillance and tracked his location and reached his house, where he was found sleeping,"

## Delhi High Court Comes Down Heavily on Gautam Gambhir

### Agenceis

Delhi High Court while hearing a petition on Covid situation in Delhi came out with heavy observation on cricketer turned politician Gautam Gambhir and asked if he has license to deal in COVID-19 drugs.

Delhi High Court division bench of Justices Vipin Sanghi and Rekha Palli asked, "Are these not prescription drugs? How is anybody able to procure large quantities? Is he holding a license to deal in these drugs?"

Rahul Mehra, representing the Delhi government, told the court that it is "highly irresponsible" on the part of Gambhir, while when contacted Gautam



Gambhir's office did not elicit any response on the Court remarks.

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday expressed its displeasure over black marketing of medical oxygen while hearing a petition on shortage of oxygen and treat-

ment of Covid patients in the national capital.

The Court said people were forced to buy oxygen cylinders in the black market for lakhs of rupees while their original cost is only a few hundred rupees. The court said

those persons indulging in black marketing of oxygen should be taken into police custody.

During the hearing, the High Court said if the Delhi government is unable to manage oxygen cylinders then they should tell the court for procuring them. The court will ask the Central government to take over the charge of managing oxygen.

The court issued contempt notices to the five oxygen refillers who were absent during the hearing on Tuesday. Delhi Chief Secretary Vijay Dev informed the court that he has requested all oxygen refillers to furnish details of the tankers supplying oxygen in Delhi following which the quota of oxygen will be allocated for three days.

## Citing Own Robust System, India Turns Down UN Supply Chain Help: Spokesperson

### Agenceis

India has turned down the UN's offer of assistance from its integrated supply chain saying that it has its own "robust" system to manage the logistics of getting material for the dealing with the COVID-19 surge, according to a UN spokesperson.

"We offered the assistance of our integrated supply chain if it

UN General Assembly President Volkan Bozkir has called for support to India, "a country which did so much to ensure the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to vulnerable countries", according to his Spokesperson Brenden Varma.

Bozkir said "that his thoughts are with the Indian Government and people" and "it is now time for the world to extend aid and



was required. We've been told at this point that it's not needed because India has a reasonably robust system to deal with this. But our offer stands, and we're willing to help in whatever way we can," Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq said on Tuesday.

The Secretary General's Chef de Cabinet Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti has been in touch with India's Permanent Representative T.S. Tirumurti, and other UN staffers have also been in touch with Indian officials in New York and in India, he said.

"Our people who deal with operational and logistical issues are willing to help, if we're needed, and we're in touch with our counterparts in India to see whether that will be useful," Haq added.

He said that there has been only a "low level" of cases among the international and local UN staff in India and the UN was taking care of them so that they don't add to the Indian health system's pressures.